

CERTAIN
SELECTED
SPIRITVALL
EPISTLES

*Written by that most Reuerend holy man
Doct̃or I. de Auila a most renowned
Preacher of Spaine*

Most profitable for all sortes of People,
whoe seeke their saluation.

Benedictus Deus qui talia dona dedit hominibus.

*Blessed bee Almighty God, who hath giuen such gifts
to men.*



At Roüen by the widdow of
Nicolas Courant.

Permissu Superiorum.

1631.





THE P R E F A C E.



T is an excellent saying, which we finde in that diuine booke intituled *THE FOLLOWING OF CHRIST* : *The felicitie, which is to be obtayned in this life, consists not, in the being able to preuent or auoid miseries, and crosses, which daily occurre; but in the patient and humble acceptation and sufferance thereof.* For indeede, there is no such thing as the not being encountred and crossed, some in one kinde, and some in another; some, by desolations of minde; some by infirmities of bodie; some by want of temporall meanes, some by vnkindenesse of freinds; some by detraction against fame, some by suites in law; and some by persecution for Religion. For these things lye as so manie snares, whereby to intrappe our patience, in this great Hospitall of the world; and some men are subject to more of them, and

some to fewer; but there is no man, who at one time or other, is not subiect to some. The businesse therefore must be, to supporte both such as Almighty God, shall either send for the punishmēt of our other sinnes, or for the greater purification and perfection of our owne soules; or for the aduancemēt of his owne glory otherwise; and such others also, as for the greater punishment of wicked men, he shall permitt them to inflict vpon vs; and to supporte them so, through the fauour of God, as not onely thereby not to forfeite heauen in the next life, but to enable vs in the midst of all our miseries, to obtaine a kinde of heauen, euen in this. For I account it to be a kinde of heauen in the crowde of trouble, not to be ouerweighed with the burthen, but to accept, & be content with the good will of God, and to aspire towards an imitation of the Passion of Christ our Lord, & to know and feele in our very harts, the substantiall & fauorie truth of that diuine saying of S. Iean Chrysostome: *It is a more glorious thing for a man to suffer for Christ, then to raigne with him.*

But now, as this doctrine is diuine, so the lesson, whereby we are to learne it, is

hard; and therefore we shall doe well to
vse the best meanes, we can, to take it out.
And for my parte I must confesse, that I
haue neuer mett in anie Authour, with so
manie, so weightie, so easie, and practica-
ble considerations, and inducements to-
wards not onely the patient, but euen the
ioyfull sufferance of all those crosses and
afflictions, which can finde the way to vs
in this world, as are deliuered by **FATHER**
AVILA in his Epistles; whereof I haue
selected the chiefe, and choice, and made
them speake with our tongue; to the end,
that we may be the better taught, to beare
those burthens of affliction, which may
otherwise proue too hard and heauie, for
our soft shoulders of flesh and bloud. And
I am confidently perswaded, that besides
the entertainment, which the reader will
finde therein otherwise, for his delight and
gust; it will be impossible for him, to haue
had, or haue a crosse of anie kinde, for
which he shall not heere finde store of re-
medies, and comforts brought to his hand.
So that he will owe a diligent, and deuout
reading to this Collection; if not for the
Author's or Translator's sake, yet at least,
for his owne.

3



A LETTER OF THE
Authour to a deere freind of his. He
shewes how great blindenes it is to
loose eternall blisse for temporall
delights.

TH E peace of our Lord Iesus
Christ, be euer with you. I recei-
ued a letter of yours some daies
past, written in *Seuill*; whereof
though I were very gladd, yet
should I haue reioyced much
more, to be there to enioy your conuersation,
which I haue soe long desired. I beseech Christ,
that wee may see one another in heauen, where
all our desires will be at an end; possessing him
who is the true fulfilling of them all.

Sir I would extreamely desire, that the smoe-
ke of theis *temporall* things, did not blinde our
harts, and hinder vs from the sight of such as
are *eternall*. What an ill exchange doth hee
make, who Looses that which may be inte-
riourly possessed, and which indeede is the true
fruite; for that which is exterior, and which is

Gen. 39.

Math.

5.

noe better then the shell, or crust. Woe be to that man, who hath more care of his goodes, then of his conscience; and who puts the soule in hazard, to secure the life of his body. Not soe, *o* you men, not soe, but rather as *Ioseph* did; whoe to secure his chastity, left his vper garmēt in the hands of her, whoe would haue robbed him of that treasure. It is the sentence of Christ our Lord, *that if our right eye be an occasion to vs of sinne, wee must pluck it out and cast it from vs. The right eye, is the loue which we carry towards goods, or honour, or life, or freinds; which, if by the inordinate aboundance thereof, it be an occasion to vs of sinne, wee are to estraunge our selues from it, and to cutt it of, least otherwise we be estraunged from God.*

Wee must *loue* nothing soe well, as that wee may not treade it vnder foote, if it hinder vs from being well with God. There is noe such thing, as holding freindship with that soueraigne king, but onely such a man as will confesse, that heauen is had very cheape, though it should chance to cost him his life. They who will thinke to comply both with their owne proper affections, and with the loue also of our Lord, are mightily deceiued. For theis men *loue* not God, but soe as they alsoe *loue* many other things, whereas God will be *loued*, aboue them all.

O error of the sonnes of men; and who hath thus deceiued them, and whoe shall be able to vnbequile them? who hath pluckt out

their eyes to leade them blinde-fould, in a ringe like another *Sampson*, liuing according to the suggestion of vice, and in the displeasure of our Lord? Who shall be able to make them vnderstand that they are straungely deceiued in seeking riches in the first place, and vertue, in a second. Yea and if it soe fall out, that both of them cannot be kept, men are content to be without vertue, soe that they may not be without money. And thus put they *light*, into the place of *darkenes*; and *darkenes* into that of *light*. O that our Lord would open the eyes of theis men! and how bitterly would they weepe, seeing how badd exchaungers they had beene? Is not perhaps the freindship of God, which is obteyned by the exercise of vertue, of more value, then all the rest of things, which can be wished? Are not perhaps *the commaundements of God more worthy to be desired then thousands of gold and siluer?* where shall we finde a true paire of scales to weigh euery thing out, for iust as much as it is; that soe we may not thus for ever liue in lyes.

Men fly as farre as they cann from being deceiued, in their temporall states. But why fly they not with greater diligence from being deceiued in some what els, which imports them more? They complaine if they be cosened in halfe the worth of any thing, which they are to buy; yea and there is noe meanes to appease them, but they will needes be seeking a remedy against that abuse. And yet they are very ready,

Judges.
16.

to loose their soules for a little gaine, or for an act of murmuring, or some other sinne. And we cannot see much as preuaile with them, to the end that they may haue some feeling of it, and say I am deceiued, let see great a wrong as this, be removed.

That soule, O men which you are loosing, is more worth then all that which can be giuen you, in exchange thereof; what doe you gett by gayning it all, if you loose your selues alone? what doth it profit you to see euery body good, if withall your selues be wicked? what doth it profit you, to gaine and growe great in point of fortune, with preiudice to your soules? and to be mighty in the sight of men, but not to be acknowledged in the sight of God?

The day will come, infallibly it will come, when *God will destroy all them whose worke is iniquity*; and for what then will that serue, to which they haue most pretended heere? O day of giuing accounte for all the daies of our liues, how little art thou considered, and therefore how little art thou feared. And men, in the meane tyme runne, with the bridle loose, and in their teeth, for the gathering of this little miserable flower which see quickly Fades, and they see with their very eyes, that it is euen slipping from betweene their fingers; and yet, there is neuer want of some body, who hath a minde to hould fast this world, whilst still it is flying speedily from them.

Sir our true repose, and our kingdome, is not

to be had in this world. What is this life, but a way from our owne houses reaching to the place, where theeuës desire to cutt our throates; since euery day we walke on more and more, and it is noe whether els, but towards death. Now who would be soe absurdly inconsiderate, as that when he were to be conducted to execution, and that much hast were vsed to dispatch him, the delinquent should yet, fall into great afflictio, because he were not sumptuously cladd; or who in such a case, would attend to busy himselfe about hearing some relation of the liues of others, or would delight himselfe, with looking vpon some publick entertainment and pastime? Or would put himselfe to study what the reason might be, why men put not of their hatts to him, with a good grace? And yet how many doe wee see (through our sinnes) depriued of all sense, who (goeing, as we all doe, to that resting place of their graues; yea and running faster thither, then any arrow flies out of a bowe,) doe yet detain themselves foolishly, some vpon fine cloathes; others, vpon a certaine paltry smoake of honour, and others, who grow angry at the hart, because iust that which they desire, is not done. And yet those very things which they desire, are neither such as helpe them to obtaine true felicity, nor hinder them from falling into eternall misery.

What in the name of God, is this which hath soe blinded vs, as that we should make *Time* of *Eternity*, and *Eternitie* of *Time*? For soe haue

1. Peter

2.

men despised that eternall blisse, which God hath prepared for them in heauen, as if it were but *temporall*; and soe haue they lodged all their loue vpon this transitory world, as if this were the thing which is *eternall*. How few are there on earth, whose passe through it, like *straungers*, as *S. Peter* saith we must; and who fasten their harts vpon the *Future*, as vpon their *Cittie*, and true place of rest? Let the tongue say what it will, but our workes proclayme vs to be *Cittizens* of this world, since we extreamely desire, to be accommodated, and exalted heere, and so take noe care though we should be but as *straungers* in the next world. Perhaps we are growne to be of opinion, that the kingdome of heauen may be obteyned without any great labour, or care. But the truth is, that euen they who take most paines, will finde that still they haue enough to doe, & that still they must continue in doubt, whether it will serue the turne, or noe; and what then will become of the rechelesse person, but that he will be sure to loose it?

1. Cor.

9.

Our life is a very match of wrastring, and he whose wrastringes as the *Apostle* saith, must wholly vntye, and dis-intangle himselfe that he may gaine his *crowne*. Wee are running for a wager, and the *Prize*, is noe lesse then the kingdome of heauen. Yet *not all they, who runne*, are to haue this *Prize*, but they onely, who runne best. What a madd man were hee, who should shackle his feete, and then thinke that he were to carry the *Prize*, which must be giuen to that

man whoe runnes a pace. And it is not a lesse absurde strange thing, that a man should en-
snare his soule, with the heauy afflictions of flesh
and bloud, which permitt him not to flye vp,
towards God.

God commaundes that to him who should
strike thee, vpon one of thy cheekes, thou
shouldest turne the other, which is as much as
to say; that not onely thou must not reuenge
thy selfe, for the iniury receiued, but that thou
art to keepe thy hart prepared, to endure an
other, if it be giuen, and still if another blowe
be offered to *turne the other cheek*; that is, to pre-
pare thy selfe for enduring iniuries, more and
more, in such sort, that the other may be soo-
ner weary of doing ill, then thou of suffering
it, for thy goodnes is to be greater, then his mal-
lice. But how then shall hee bee able, to make a
speedy course in this way, who is fettered in
the chaines of worldly Honour which requires
that we reuenge the iniuries which are done vs.
For as S. Gregory saith, *Noe man feels the weight
of dishonour, but he who loues his owne honour.* And
therefore if this loue be not laid a side; how
shall we be euer able to *runne*.

If God commaund that wee must rather dye
then committ a mortall sinne, how shall we be
able to comply with his will heerein, if wee
cast not of the *chaines* of that inordinate loue
which we carry to this life. *Couetousnes* is a *Chaine*,
which permitts vs not to liue in good neigh-
bourhood with others. *Envy* is a *Chaine*, *Anger* is

Manh.

5.

a *Chaine*, and the *loue of our silues* is a *Chaine*, and roote of all the rest. What a sottish thing is it therefore, for a man to thinke that hee, whose affects those things which his owne will suggests, is able to runne that carriere, wherein the seruants of God must runne, and whose because he contents himselfe, thinkes that God will also be contented with it, and who liuing after his owne fashion, will yet conceiue, that he may liue soe with God.

Away, away, lett vs awake at last, for the loue of God lett vs awake, before hell-fire awake vs. And lett vs knowe, that the *kingdome of God is a hidden treasure*; and that he who findes it must bestowe all that he hath, vpon the purchase thereof, esteeming himselfe more happy and rich in this alone, then in all things els. A man who hath a minde to gaine this Kingdome, is not bound to become bankrupt, or to be a beggar, but that which he needes is, that for the loue of this kingdome, hee cutt of all occasion of inordinate *loue* which he may carry to riches, and to honour, and to a delicate and delightful life, and in fine to his owne *proper will*. Christ our lord will haue vs all naked, that soe we may runne on apace to him, who dyed naked for vs. That man is *naked*, who houlds his life, and his *honour*, laid vnder, and in subiection to the will of Christ our Lord, doing what Christ will, and not that, which is suggested by pleasure, or honour; and who makes as light account of these things, as if he had them not;

and is ready to cast them all into a light fire, rather then to goe against the freindship of our Lord God, by committing soe much as one sinne. And though perhaps a man may attend to the improuement of his estate; it must not be for the loue, which he carryes to it; but because God commaunds it. If he liue, it must not be because he loues life, as making that the end of his care; but he must keepe it, for the seruice of God; and sooner throwe it away, then offend him. If he be to aparell himselfe, he must not take counsaile with vanity how he may be esteemed for his cloathes; but with the word of our Lord which commaunds that we vse them not with superfluity, but for the supply of iust necessity. And soe this kinde of man, doth not hould himselfe to be his owne, but as one who belongs wholly to God. He cares not, for what himselfe desires, but for that which God commaunds. He layes all things, and himselfe withall, to be trodden vpon, vnder foot; for soe he may hould God aboue his head. God commaunds and hee obeyes; God directs and hee submitts; and as the shadow followes the body, soe hee followes the will of God.

Thes are true sonnes of *Obedience*, to whome it is promised, that *they shall sit at the table of God*; And that, as the true sonne suffered by *Obedience*, and entred soe into his kingdome, soe the adopted sonnes must alsoe enter in, by the same meanes. There is noe coulour of reason why a man, for hauing obeyed the orders

of the great Turke, should goe to aske a reward of the *Christian Emperour*; and yet if hee should it would be easy to make him this answere, *Let him pay you, whome you haue serued* And soe will God answere them, whose liued heere in obedience to their owne appetites when they shall aske him that reward of glory.

Great thanks doe we owe to Christ our Lord, for hauing warned vs of this soe longe before, that soe if we will thinke thereon, we may not finde our selues deceiued by him, who soe deere ly loued vs, His aduertissement is this. *Not euery one whose saith to mee Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdome of heauen; but he shall enter in who doth the will of my Father, who is in heauen.* What neede haue wee of any more, since the word of Christ our Lord can neuer faile? And who is that man, who will not awake with this. For the question is not now, concerning any earthly kingdome, but the kingdome of heauen; since noe man enters thither but he who shall haue done the will of God. Let this therefore, be our study, let this be our discourse, let vs counsaile men to this, and let vs in fine obserue vigilantly, if we doe any thing which carryes not true conformitie, with the will of our Lord. And because our owne watchfulnes will not suffice, lett vs call vpon our Lord, that hee may assist vs. Let vs acknowledge our owne misery, and let vs cordially implore his mercie. Our lord who must helpe vs is noe

such person, as that he can deny himself to such as seeke him, with their harts. And if we did indeede knock & call vpon him, infallibly he would answere & open to vs. And he knocks *indeede*; who knocks both by prayer, & by the practise of vertue. And he shall be heard, when he calls, who was content to hearken to his neighbour, when he was called vpon by him; and whoe assisted him in his necessities, and who pardoned his errours, and who neither did ill to him, nor refused patiently to suffer ill from him.

This is the generation of them who seeke our Lord, and they shall finde him. Let vs therefore goe, and runne this *carriere*. For happy are those labours, which are endured for the obteyning of this *Crowne*. And they shall soone passe away, but their reward is to last for euer. Let vs lay vp our treasure there. It will be highly enough for vs, to possesse God; and let vs not loose our tyme, for it was not giuen vs to be lost. But let vs liue, to the end that we may euer liue; and soe wee shall passe on, from contumely to glory, from pouerty to plenty, from banishment to our owne country, which we shall possesse through the eternities of all eternities. Amen.

Psal.
13.

*A letter to a certaine person , wherein
is treated of the Loue of God tow-
ards man , and of that which hee is
wont to doe towards the releife of
our miserie.*

THE Infant *Iesus* whoe was borne for our good , make you partaker of the blessings, which he brings, since he tooke those miseries vpon him to which we were subject; I beseech him to giue you that liuely fire of his loue, wherein you may burne vp with a quick flame; since to kindle this loue in vs, he came into the world; soe poore, and soe frosen with cold. How much more cold this Infant suffers, soe much more warme doth he cloath our harts towards the loue of him. And by how much the more we loue him, soe much the more doe we desire to suffer for him. For loue flies from taking ease; as from a thing which is very contrary to the intention and end thereof. For whilest others are seeking for libertie, and delight, he whoe loues abhors this, and desires to be eternally a slaue, and to be euer labouring for whome he loues.

I pray you tell me , who constraind Almighty God to become man? noe other thing

but onely *Loue*: Who constrayned him (since there was noe remedy, but that he would become man) that he must needs be borne in soe hard and soe bitter a tyme of the yeare, and in a country where he was a straunger, and in steede of a house, that it must needs be in a stable; and all this in soe great pouertie, and basenes, that he well deserues compassion at our hand. Certainly noe other thing but *Loue* could haue brought him as it were, all bound from heauen, to the most pure wombe of our Blessed Lady, and from that wombe, it brought him to that hard manger, and from thence, to many other afflictions, and soe at last to the *Crosse*, where louing vs with much truth of loue, he procured that we might truely loue him, as himselfe had said before. *If I be exalted from the earth, I will draw all things vp to my selfe.* *Exalting from the earth*, signifies to dye vpon the *Crosse* as he did. And then drew he all things to himselfe, by meanes of that mighty loue, which he kindled in the hart of man. For, looking towards this true louer, some haue beene content to forgett their countries, and to liue in continuall pilgrimage; others to forsake their estates, and to liue in pouerty; others haue offered themselues to seuerall afflictions, yea and to death it selfe, desiring rather to suffer for Christ our Lord then to be delighted any way but in him. And let his mercie be praised for euer, for that amongst them, whoe through the noble loue of the Crucifix haue forgotten all their

Iohn. 3
12. 21.

fortunes and themselves withall, your selfe is growne to be one, not of your selfe, but by him whoe workes his owne glorie in you. And therefore he will not leaue you in the weake hands of your selfe alone, since he, & not you, begin the worke.

You therefore my good lady, may well reioyce, you may reioyce in God, since you are well protected vnder a mantle which is both soe soft, and soe stronge. Stronge to defende you from your enemies, and from your selfe, whoe are the greatest enemy you haue; and soft or sweete to comfort you in your afflictions; and to feelee them, as if they were his owne, and to giue you part of his hart, which is soe greatly wounded with loue for you. How could our Lord haue expected & drawne, or guarded, or susteyned you, if he had not loued you with great truth of loue? How is it possible that your sinnes would not haue prouoked him to wrath, if there had not beene as much loue in him, as serued to make him shut his eyes towards them, and to open them towards the doing you fauour?

But you will say, *How come I to be soe happie, as that the eternall king should loue mee, and for that reason should endure mee, and doe mee soe much good insteade of ill.* I will answere you, when you shall first haue tolde mee, why the fire burnes; and why the sunne shines; and why the water refreshes; and why euery thing is endewed with his owne nature. And if you say

the fire burnes because it is fire, soe doe I alsoe tell you, that because God is God, therefore doth hee loue vs freely, and shewes mercy to such as deserue it not.

Our pride hath nothing, noe it hath nothing, whereof to glory; but the shame, and dishonour, must be ours, and the honour his. The good wee may enioye; but the glorie must be his. For soe the angells sung when the blessed Infant was borne; *Glory be to God in the heauens, and peace to men of good will.* Lett vs giue the glory to the Lord of vs all, for the mercies which we haue receiued at his hand. Glory be to him, because he hath deliuered vs with soe much power, from the hands of them, to whome we had deliuered our selues, with soe miserable a resolution. Glory be to him, whoe drew vs to grace wee being out of his grace; and who sustaines vs, and crownes vs with mercy, and with many mercies, and whoe giues vs to vnderstand, that hee will finish that in vs, which hee hath begunne. For he is went to haue the charge and care of any busines, to whome the honour must result; and he whoe reapes the honour, must be content to take the care. And now since this Blessed Lord of ours, will be glorified in vs, and will take the honour of our victorie to himselfe, he will alsoe take the care of our combatt, and hee will enable vs to passe through it to him; and will tye vs to himselfe, with soe stronge a knott of loue, that neither life, nor death, shall diuide vs.

Luk 2

He will enable vs to looke vpon himselfe with open eyes ; and to shutt them towards all other things ; and he will imprint himselfe soe fast vpon our harts , that , for the loue and memory of him , wee shall forgett not onely all other things , but our very selues alsoe. This will he doe , whoe is soe pittious , & soe powerfull , and his name is holy , and hee it is , whoe loues vs more then we can either say , or thinke. For his workes exceede all created vnderstanding. To him be glorye for the eternitie of all eternities. Amen.

As for that which you aske mee , concerning my health , it goes ill with mee , since I am vnworthy of sicknes. For if I were not very vnworthy , our Lord would not haue taken my paine from mee , soe soone , as he hath taken it. And as for the rest of your letter , I answere that a great fire , by how much the more it is shutt vp and concealed , soe much the hotter it burnes. Christ our Lord make you his true and faithfull disciple , that soe you may , in some sort correspond to that vnspeakeable and diuine loue of his , as I cordially desire of him for you.


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*A letter to a reuerend and religious person, encouraging him towards the perfect loue of God; and representing to him some meanes for the obteyning thereof.*

**R**euereend father, *Pax Christi*. Since our Lord Iesus Christ is not pleased that, at this tyme, I should be where I might enioy the communication of your selfe, and of those my Masters the Collegialls, as I had wished, lett his name be blessed for all, and in the meane tyme I must endure it with patience. Wherein yet, mee thinks, I shall not be performing a small penance, for it is a hard thing for vs to endure to be diuided from the persons whome wee loue. And in very truth I did neuer soe much desire to be assisted by you in some things as now, For I conceiue, that it might haue proued greatly to the seruice of our Lord. But yet since by one that loues, all things are well taken, I will speake a little to you in absence, till our Lord ordaine that wee may be present.

Sir I much desire that we may seeke God who is our totall Good, and that, not after any ordinary manner, but like some one whose seekes a great treasure, which is much esteemed,

and for loue whereof he sells all that hee is worth; accounting himselfe rich in possessing that a lone, insteede of many other things, which he had before.

O God, ô Lord, ô thou the true repose of the most interiour part of our soules; and when shall wee beginn, I say not to loue thee, but at least to desire to loue thee? When I say shall we conceiue a desire of thee, such a one as may be worthy of thee? When shall *veritie* be able to preuaile more with vs, then vanity? beauty, then deformity? repose, then restles care? the Creatour who is soe richly full, and all-sufficient, before the creature, whoe is soe very empty, and poore? Deare Lord, and whoe, at length, will open our eyes, that we may knowe that there is nothing out of thee, which either hath any countenance in it selfe, or is able to giue any true contentment to vs? who will make some little discouery of thee to vs; that soe being all enamored of thee, wee may goe, may runne, may flye, and may remaine eternally with thee?

Woe be to vs, for wee are extreameley farre from God, and wee are in soe little paine for that distance, as that wee can scarce be said to feeble it. What is become of the profound, and tender sighes of those soules, which had tasted once of God, and were afterwards estraunged a little from him? what is become of that holy affection, wherewith *David* said: *If I shall gine sleepe to mine eyes, or slumbering to myne eyelids; till*

*I haue found a house . wherein our Lord may dwell.*  
And this *house* wee our selues are; when wee destroy not our selues, by scattering our harts vpon variety of things, but recollect them to the vnity of one desire, and of one loue, and then it is, that we finde our selues, and are indeede the *house of God*.

For my part, I belecue, that he said true who affirmed the cause of our tepidity to be this, That he who hath not tasted yett of God, doth not knowe in very deede what it is, either to haue hunger or satiety. And so wee are neither hungry after God, nor are wee entirely satisfied by creatures; but we remaine as certaine frozen things, being neither heere, nor there, full of dulnes, and discouragement; & without all taste of spirit, and fitt to cause a vomitt in his stomacke, who likes not seruants who are *Luke warme*, but desires to haue them inflamed with the fire of loue. This fire himselfe brought into the world, and desires nothing but that it may burne; and to the end that it may doe soe, himselfe did burne, and was consumed vpon the *Crosse*, like that redd Cow, which was carried out of the campe. And this he did of sett purpose, to the end that wee, taking of that wood of the *Crosse* vpon our selues, might make a fire, and might warme our selues, and keepe correspondence with soe great a loue, with some loue of ours, considering how iust a thing it is, that we should be wounded by the sweete dart of loue, since wee see him not onely wounded, but killed by it.

*Luke.*  
22

*num.*  
19.

It is but reason that wee be taken by the loue of him, who was taken thereby for vs; & deliuered ouer for our sakes, into such fierce hands. Lett vs enter into that prison of his loue, since he entred into the prison of ours, and thereby was made as tame, as any lambe, before them who treated him soe ill. And this prison was that, which made him remaine quiet vpon the *Crosse*. For more strange, and rude, were those ropes, and prisons of his loue, then the nailes and ropes which restrayned his person. These later, laying hould but vpon his body, but his loue being that which seized his soule. And therefore lett our harts be tyed by his loue (that tye of saluation) and lett vs not desire such liberty, as may carry vs out of his prison. For as he is very ill in health, who is not wounded, and made sick of his loue: soe is he very ill at liberty, who is not restrayned in that prison. Lett vs now resist him noe longer, let vs yeild our selues conquered by his *armes*, which are his *benefits*, whereby he procures to kill vs, that soe we may euer liue with him. He desires to burne vs vp; *that soe the old man who was conforme to Adā* being consumed, *the new man who is conforme to Christ our Lord* may rise againe by loue. He desires to melt our hardnes, to the end that as vpon mettall which is made liquid by heate, that forme is imprinted which is desired by the worke-man; soe wee (being softened by that loue, which makes vs melt by hearing our beloued speake to vs) may be ready, without all resistance, that soe Christ our Lord

may imprint vpon vs, what figure shall be moſt pleaſing to him. Now that figure, which he deſires to imprint, is noe other then that of *Loue*. For *Chriſt our Lord is very Loue it ſelfe; & he commaunded that we ſhould loue one another, as he loued vs.* And S. Paule tells vs, that we muſt ſoe be in loue with Chriſt our Lord, as he loued vs; and deliuered himſelfe vp for vs. Soe that vnleſſe we *loue*, we are vnlike him; our countenance hath noe reſemblance to his, but we are poore, naked, blinde, deaſe, and dumbe, and dead. For *loue* a lone, is that which quickenes all things, and *loue* is that, which is the ſpirituall-cure of our ſoules. For the ſoule without *loue* is iuſt ſuch a thing as the body is, without the ſoule.

Let vs therefore *loue*, and we ſhall liue, let vs *loue* and we ſhall grow like God; nay we ſhall wound him, whoe is to be wounded by *loue* alone. Lett vs *loue* and all things ſhall be ours, ſince they are all to ſerue vs, as it is written, *They that loue God ſhall prone well in all things.* If we loue this *loue*, lett vs apply the axe of diligence, to the roote of our owne *ſelfe-loue*, and ſoe bring this enemy of ours to the ground. What haue we of our ſelues! let vs hedge our ſelues in God, and make noe account at all of any thing els. Let not our owne loſſes trouble vs, but the loſſes of God, which are the ſoules who depart from him. And becauſe it is a hard thing, for a man to leaue to *loue* himſelfe, let vs ſhed many teares, whereby it may be made eaſy for vs, to dig vp this *earth*. Let vs groane out to God, from the very

Iohn.  
15.

Gal. 2

profoundest of our harts, for our teares doe euen wound almighty God, though they be foe weake, and soft, and though he be omnipotent.

*Psal.* Lett vs entertaine good thoughts, for as *38.* *David* saith; *My thought is a very founace.* But aboue all let vs place our selues, and not come quickly out againe, but make our habitation, in the woundes of Christ our Lord, and particularly in his sacred side. For there his hart being deuided and peirced for vs, will receiue ours into it, and foe it will growe warme, through the greatnes of his loue. *For whoe can remaine in fire, and not growe warme,* at least to some proportion? O that we could dwell there, and how happye should we be therein? what is the reason that we depart thence foe soone? Because we take not vp those five lodgings, in that high mountaine of the *Crosse*, where Christ our Lord was transfigured indeede, though not towards beauty, but towards deformitie, basenes and dishonour: which lodgings are granted to vs; nay we are desired to take them, though those other three *tabernacles* which *S. Peter* desired, were denyed to him.

*Lewit.* If some little sparke of this fire be kindled  
6 in our harts, let vs take great care, that the winde blowe it not out, since it is foe little. Let vs couer it with the ashes of humilitie, let vs hould our peace and hide it, and foe we shall finde it still aliuie. And we must, *dayly add some wood to it,* as God commaundeth his Preists to doe. And that signifies to vs the doeing of good



workes: and the not loosing of any tyme, and, about all things, we must approach to the true fire which may kindle and enflame vs, and this is *Iesus Christ* our Lord, in the *Blessed Sacrament*.

Let vs open the mouth of our soule, which is our *desire*, and let vs goe all gaping towards the fountaine of liuing water, for soe without doubt, if we take hony into our mouths, we shall haue some taste thereof. And in fine if the fire be in our bosome, it will heate vs. But both before and after we communicate, we must vse some preparations, and reflections; and there cannot be any better, then a liuely Faith, that we goe then to receiue *Iesus Christ* our Lord; together with a consideration, and loue of his *passion*, since that misterie was instituted, in memory thereof. Being thus refreshed, lett vs then prouide our selues for our communicating the next tyme after. For he whoe onely prepares himselfe, for the present tyme, shall seldome finde himselfe well prepared.

Let vs therefore runne after God, for we may be sure enough, that he will not flye from vs. He is nayled vpon the Crosse, and infallibly we shall finde him there. Let vs conueigh him into our harts, and then shutt the doore, that he retyre not thence. Let vs dye to all visible things, since there will come a tyme, when we must leaue them perforce.

Let vs renew our selues in newnes of spirit since we haue liued soe long according to the old man. Let vs be growing in knowledge and

*Eph. 4*



Psal.

144.

Psal. 9.

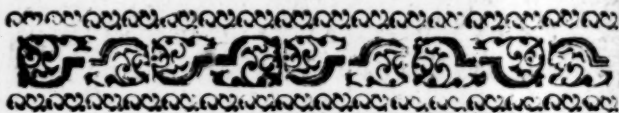
loue of Christ our Lord, who is the soueraigne good. And all this is to be obteyned by humble prayer, and perseuerant endeauour. More is receiued into the soule from without the soule, then doth proceede of the soule. It is more for it to be moued and disposed, then to worke when that is done. And therefore let vs remoue all impediments, and compose our owne harts within our selues, expecting Christ our Lord there; who enters when the gates are shutt, to visit and comfort his Disciples; and soe without doubt, he will come to vs. For *Dauid* saith of him, *Our Lord heard the desire of the poore, and his eares harkened to the preparation of his hart.* And since Christ our Lord is principally he who must worke this in vs, we haue noe reason to distrust, but taking courage and confidence in such a conductor as he is, let vs beginne to runne that course with seruour, which ends not, but in the obteyning of God.

And if we cannot soe soone, make our harts as subiect to vs as we would, lett vs yet endure it with patience, till *God rise vp and soe our enemies may fall, and till he awake, and commaund this sea to calme it selfe.* But then on the other side, his expresse pleasure is, that we haue confidence in him, euen in the greatest temptations, yea though our little barkes should be vpon the very point to sincke.

Let vs not therefore be disturbed, or dismayed. Let vs not put others to paine, for the trouble which this continuall warre gives vs, in

threatning that we shall be ouercome. The day will arriue, when God will put this country of ours into peace when wee shall sleepe, without any body by to wake vs. And now, since this peace cannot be obteyned yet, it will be a better course for vs, to goe sweating and struiuing to roote out our passiōs, then to keepe our selues in ease, and to content our selues with leading a tepid life, for the auoyding of that paine which the seeking of perfection would put vs to. But first lett vs vtterly distrust our selues, and confide in God, and let vs beginne in the name, and power of the omnipotent. And this begining of ours shall be *humilitie*, which is figured in the *ashes* that we take; and our end shalbe *loue*, which is figured in the resurrection of our Lord; and soe we shall inioye both a *good lent*, and a *good Easter*.

In the meane tyme I kisse the hands, of all my Masters your *Collegialls*, and I recommend my selfe to their prayers. And say you to them in my name, that I beseech them that we may loue both God, and our neighbours, in great measure. That soe at the day of iudgment, we may know well how to *answeare*; and that we may be made doctours, & be receiued into the Colledge of the *Angells*, and Saints, where we shall euer study the booke of life, which is God himselfe, who will for euer stand open before our eyes, that we may knowe him, & loue him, and for euer be in possession of him. Our Lord Iesus remaine, euer with you. Amen.



*A Letter of the Author to a certaine lady, Hee shewes, how the hunger of our hart cannot be satisfied but by the spirit of our lord, who that hee may lodge himselfe therein, requires that it bee free from all affection to creatures. And how, tepid and negligent persons greiue that spirit, & how the Feast of the holy Ghost is a very good preparation for the Feast of Corpus Chisti which followes.*

**M**ADAM, I desire to know how your hart standes affected at this tyme. For if wee looke to the weeke, wherein wee are, it is belonging to the *holy Ghost*, whose property is to giue light to the vnderstanding, and to infuse loue into the will; and euen strength into the body alsoe; by meanes of which three loaves of bread, we shall haue some what to set before our freind, who comes hungry, and weary from the high way. For the hunger that our hart feeles (which walkes as it were out of it selfe whilest it employes it selfe vpon creatures) this *holy Ghost* is wont to take away, and to giue vs the bread of fulnes, and sa-

isfaction. And woe be to vs, if we feele not that great defect, which is in things created; and if we conuert nor our selues to god in our very harts; at least now when they are weary, with finding imperfections, & wants, in those things, wherein we hoped that they might obtaine repose.

O my deere God, and when shall we maintaine our soules in perfect faith and puritie towards thee, and be sincerely loyall to *Iesus Christ* our Lord, who is the spouse thereof, giuing him our loue, all intyre, and wholly free, from mingling it selfe with the basenes of creatures? When shall we be able to vnderstand this truth, that he who is to owne our soules, is Christ our Lord, and that he created vs for himselfe, and that he onely is fitt for vs? Is it not enough, that we haue tryed so often by experience, how ill the world is wont to serue vs; and that our soule could neuer finde any true repose or peace, but onely when coming to knowe her owne misery, and poorenes, it went to God, and was imbraced by him. Is not one of those short fitts of tyme more worth then their whole life, who sacrifice themselues to vanitie, and to the confusion of this ignorant world, wherein they liue? Or shall it not now at length bee tyme to saye to all things created, *I know you not, that see I may provide a cleane and ready place, for the reception of him, who created you all of nothing?*

I am extreemely glad, that we haue to doe

Eph. 4

with a *Holy ghost*, which is soe very *holy*, as that he would not come euen to the disciples themselves of our Lord, till euen his owne pretious body were taken out of their sight. That so we may know the condition of this holy spirit to be such, as that we must prouide a temple for it where noe other thing may dwell, or els it will not enter there. And I am highly glad, that you by the grace of this *spirit*, will haue prepared your selfe; and that you will haue receiued him, and that you, and he, are well content with one another. Reioyce you with this Holy ghost, for he is *loy* it selfe. And remember, that the Apostle S. Paule requires vs, *not to contristate the holy spirit of God, whereby wee are marked out, for the day of redemption*, which is of the iudgment of the latter day.

He contristates this *Spirit*, whoe with a dull and dejected hart, goes faintly and negligently about his seruice, & whoe doth things, which displease this most soueraigne guest, who as himselfe is fire, soe will he haue his seruant full of seruour, and requires that he goe about his worke, with great life. And that he euer be casting on the wood of good workes, and blowing it with holy thoughts, that soe this celestiall fire, may not be quenched in vs, since our very life consists in keeping it alieue. And soe if we maintaine this fire in vs, it will maintaine vs in him, though yet still it be true, that he first giues vs that, which afterward we giue to him. So that, in this respect, your ladyship

will haue beene fedd at a good table, this weeke; since you will haue celebrated, the *Feast* of the *holy ghost*, not according to flesh and blood, as they doe, whoe vse to content themselues with the talke and tumult of great *Festiuities*, but you will haue celebrated it, in *Spirit*, according to the aduice of our Lord, who requires to be Spiritually adored.

Iohn.

4.

Lett vs now consider how it stands with you, concerning the sent & odour of the *Festiuities*, of the *Body of our Lord*, which is now neere at hand. For it will be an extreame shame, for a Christian hart, not to hunger and aspire, toward this *holy bread*, before the *Festiuities* it selfe arriue; since the *three kings* those *wise men* of the *Ghospell*, had a sent of it so farre of; yea and the *Prophets*, and *Patriarchs* had the like a longe tyme, before his Incarnation. What more happy newes can there be, then to see Christ our Lord, passe amongst vs in our streetes, and through our hands communicating, and conuersing with men? And to haue him sett before our eyes; & to finde him (whome neither the whole earth, nor all the heauens can comprehend) shut within the narrow curtaine of the accidents of bread, and after all this, to make his entrance into our vnworthy woefull brests.

Math.

2.

Take heede you heare not this newes with deafe cares; but awake your hart, and require it to be very attentiueto see great a fauour, and worke of God; and that it instantly cast vp,



whatsoever other meate it may haue swallowed; that soe being full of hunger, it may grow all full, of this *celestiall bread*, where vpon the Angells feede. And bid it be sure, to watch now, that soe it may not then fall a sleepe. And since it is the worke of the *holy Ghost* you must begg grace, whereby you may be able to finde the effect of that *Feast* of the *body of our Lord*, which was *conceined by the same holy Ghost*. And soe when that *Feast* of his *most holy body* shall be come, the *Holy Ghost* will alsoe come with it; because the *Holy Ghost* descended into the world, through the meritts of *Christ our Lord*. And when his *Body* shall be giuen vs, we shall receiue the *holy Ghost*, together with it; according to the rate of that good disposition, which we shall haue. Soe that one *Festiuity* must helpe and be a preparation for another; and must giue vs hunger to feede vpon the fruite of the other. For it is not heere as it happens in the banquets of this world; which are made by flesh and bloud. Where they whoe haue fedd full, at noone haue noe minde at all to their meate at night. But the soule goes feeding with a fresh appetite, from one *Festiuitie* to another; and soe that is accomplished, which God promised. *The threshing of your corne shall last vntill you goe to vintage; and till the new time of seede, and you shall eate your bread in abundance.*

Leuit.  
26.

The goodnes of God be blessed, which soe liberally prouides for vs; and that, not in any

meane fathion, but by giuing his very selfe to vs. The sonne is giuen to vs, and the *Holy Ghost* for his sake; and these *two persons*; giuing themselves; the father cannot choose but be alsoe giuen. In fine the *Father*, the *Sonne* and the *Holy Ghost* are ours. Wee already begin, euen heere, that mutuall contract, which we are to perfect in heauen. Let vs giue him humbly thanks, for his mercies. Lett vs prepare our selues for the receauing of new fauours and with harts exalted aboue the earth, let vs celebrate the *Festinities* of heauen, to the end that we may passe from these temporall Ioyes; to those eternall, wherein I humbly beseech our Lord that you may one day see your selfe.  
Amen.



*A letter of the Authour to a Virgin lady,  
who asked of him what Charitie  
was. He answeres to her demaunde;  
and shewes her the Loue, and Cha-  
ritie, which she is to haue to God and  
her neighbours, heere on earth, by that  
loue and charitie, which the saints  
haue in heauen.*

1. Cor  
13.

1. Cor.  
13.

**D**EVOU T spouse of Christ our Lord; you  
aske me in your letter, what Charitie is; to  
the end that you may guide your whole life the-  
reby. For the saying of the Apostle S. Paule is  
true, and *whaisoener wee doe without Charitie, is  
nothing worth, though wee should deliuer our  
bodies into the fire.* Your demaunde is very  
great, and I could wish, that the same Apostle S.  
Paule, whose sentence moued you to aske me  
the question, might enable me also to make the  
answeare. For I know not what greater thing  
then this, you could haue asked mee, since the  
sublime parte of all our christian religion, con-  
sists in it. And as the same Apostle saith, *He who  
lines according to it, is a fulfiller of the whole law.*  
Soe that you o deuout spouse of Christ our

Lord,

Lord, must beseech the *holy ghost*, whose proper attribute is *Love*, that he will teach, and write that thing in your hart; whereof you aske, as he taught it vpon the day of *Pentecost*, when hee infused it; into the harts of his Apostles. For know; that this is the true teacher of this language, and soe as there is none but he.

For alas! what can my tongue which is made of earth, expresse of that which is onely vsed with perfection in heauen. This is a celestiall language; and they whoe speake it perfectly, are the blessed spiritts, which attend to nothing els, but truly to loue our Lord God, with all their strength; and all that which his pleasure is, that they shall loue. How shall I be able to speake to you of that *Love*, which is subiect to noe interest, and is accompanied with noe selfe-loue; and lookes towards noe other marke, and aymes at noe other scope, but onely God? How I say; shall I speake of it, whome my father *Adam* hath left all wrapped vp in mine owne interest, and who apply my selfe, to seeke my selfe in all things. See how much. For euen in those things, which concerne the seruice of God, wee doe soe hang towards our selues, that many tymes wee performe them for our owne interest, or end. And though the workes themselves be holy, yet the loue wherewith wee doe them, is impure. And the difference doth onely consist in this; that when wee seeke our selues by euill workes; our *Love* runnes through a conduit of clay; & when we seeke our selues

Iohn. 6

by good workes, it runnes indeede through a cōduit of gould, but in fine it runnes towards our felues. I beseech our true doctour *Iesus Christ* our Lord, ( *who euer sought the honour of his Father;* and whose *loue* abased him to this world, not for the accomplishing of his owne will, but his who sent him ) that he will vnty my tongue, to the end that I may tell you some part of that which you demaunde. For certainly, if your good desire did not oblige me to lett you know what I haue read, my poorenes would oblige mee to hould my peace.

And now to the end that you might better vnderstand, what *Charitie* is; and how you may euer goe, imployed therein, I could wish you knew, some parte of that *Loue*, which the Blessed spiritts haue in heauen, to the end that you may know thereby, wherein true *Charitie* doth consist. For how much neerer we shall come to that loue, so much the more perfect, will our *loue* be, you must know that the *loue* which is in heauen, doth transforme the Saints, into the same *will* with that of our lord God. For one of the effects of *loue*, as S. Dionisius saith, is, to make the scuerall *wills* of such as *loue*, to be but one; I meane, that they should haue the same *will*, and the same *not will*, which the other hath. And now since the *will*, and *loue*, which our lord hath, is but onely of his owne glory, and of his essence which is supremely perfect, and glorious, from hence it followes that the *loue* of the Saints, is a *Loue*;

and will, wherewith they loue, and desire, with all their strength, that our lord God, may in himselfe be still as good, as glorious, and as worthy of honour as hee is. And for as much as they see all that, to be already in him, which they can desire, there followes there vpon, *the fruite of the holy ghost*, which is an vnspeakeable ioy, to see him whome they loue soe much, to be soe full of treasures, and felicitie in himselfe, as they desire. Gal. 5.

If you will haue a touch, or at least some little sent of this diuine *ioye*, doe but consider how great that *ioy* is, which a good Sonne receiues; in seeing his father whome he loues much, full of honour, beloued by all, rich, powerfull, noble, and very much esteemed by the king. Certainly there be sonnes soe gratefull, and well disposed to their parents, as to esteeme, that nothing can be compared to the ioy, of seeing their fathers soe esteemed; which reaches indeede soe farre, as that to whatsoeuer necessitie, or affliction themselves may be subiect, it serues not to depriue them of that great *ioy*, because they aspire to noe other end but onely the honor of their parents.

Now if this ioy be soe great what doe you conceiue, that the *ioy* of the Saints may be; when being transformed by *loue*, into that true lord of theirs, the vniuersall creatour of all things; they shall see him, soe full of goodnes soe holy and soe rich in beauty; and that he is a Lord, and creatour, soe infinitely powerfull, as



that by one onely act of his will, all that which is created hath his beauty, and his being, and noe one leafe of any tree, can so much as wagge, but by his will ? Infallibly this is such a ioy, as *noe eye hath seene, nor eare hath heard, nor can such an vnspokeable knowledge as this, ever enter into the hart of any man, but such a one as enioyes and possesse it.*

You see heere the loue which the Saints haue in heauen, speaking according to the poorenes of our vnderstanding. And from this abundant swelling River, *which delights the Citty of God*, doth flow that loue which the soules in heauen beare to their *neighbourys*. For as all the desire and ioy of the Saints consisteth in their *seeing God* ( who is their true loue ) full of honour, and glory; from hence they grow to loue, with a most feruent loue, and to desire with an excesse of appetite, that all the Saints may be as full of glory, and beauty, as they alsoe are. And they ioy in this, to a strange proportion, because he is honoured, and glorified in them whose honour and glory, they onely seeke. And in regard that this is the cause why they loue the Saints, from hence it growes, that they ioy more, and doe more desire the glory, and beauty, of the greatest Saints, then of their very selues, because they see that our Blessed Lord, is more glorified in those others, then in them. And by this tyme, you may perceiue how farre this holy cōpany is, from *selfe-loue*, & from *enuy*, which springs from that roote.

But you will tell me perhaps, that it followes from hence, that they will be subiect to some disgust, because themselves are not soe growne in sanctity as others are, since thereby the glory of God would alsoe haue encreased in them. This doth not follow, considering that first effect of *loue*, which is the vnion of two *wills* in one; for they are transformed into the *will* of God, and would haue nothing done, but that which their lord *will*, and they see, that this *will*, is the cause why one hath more glory then another, and from hence they grow to be highly content, with that which he assigns to them, as alsoe, because the diuersity of the degrees of glory, in the blessed, doth more beautify the whole Citty of God, then if they were all, of one rancke; as the musick of a vyall, is much the sweeter, because it hath diuers strings, and distinct soundes, then if they were all, but any one. And since it is soe, that *because there are different degrees of glory and diuers mansions in the triumphant Church*, it is of greater beauty, then if they all possessed but one, and the same degree of glory, by this they see that our Lord is more honoured in them, then if they were all equall, and consequently they are not troubled for their owne being lesse in glory, then those others are. For they in their colours, and others in other colours of a deeper dye, doe all concurre, to manifest the infinite goodnes, and beauty of him, who made them.

Heere you see, that *river* which S. Iohn disco-

1. Cor.  
11.  
Iohn.  
14.

Apoe.  
22

Apoc.  
19.

uered, in the *Apocalyps* to issue out of the throne of God, and of the lambe, whereof all the blessed spirits in heauen drinke. And being inc-briated by this *loue*, they sing an euerlasting *Alleluia* admiring, and glorifying our lord God. And you will haue discerned a little of that enamell, wherewith those pretious stones are accompanied, *wherevpon that temple of the celestiall mountaine is founded.*

Apoc.  
11.  
Eua.  
25.

And now after the resemblance of this temple, which you haue scene in that mountaine you must build a dwelling place in your soule for our lord; iust as they said to *Moyse*, that he should provide to make the *Tabernacle*, after that forme which he had scene in the mountaine. You must my good sister, (if you meane to goe through the way of this life, in perfect *charitie*, and *loue* of our lord) procure to carry about you a continuall desire, (or at least the *most* continuall that you can) whereby you may euer wish and like that our lord God (in whose presence you are still to walke) maybe in himselfe, as good, as holy, and as full of glory, as indeede hee is. And soe with great *ioy*, and *complacence*, in all the *attributes* of almightie God, you are to goe reioycing, and your soule is to feast it selfe, inseeing that your lord & your true *loue*, possesse himselfe, whoe is infinitely good, & powerfull, from whome all creatures receiue their being, and their *beauty*, & who in himselfe is soe full of glory, and goodnes, that all creatures haue neede of him, & he none of them.

This must be the whole scope, at which your loue must ayme. And heerein *S. Thomas* saith, *that perfect charitie doth consist.* As for the loue which new deuotes, call Charitie, which is when they are kindled in deuotiō, & in louing our lord tenderly, though this be a holy thing, yet is it not of soe high condition, as that other most holy loue, which transformes soules into the beloued. To this loue, the holy scripture inuites vs in many places saying; *Reioyce you iust persons in our lord.* And *S. Paule* saith; *Reioyce in our lord.* And conceiuing that this aduise was worthy to be giuen more then once, he repeates it saying, yet againe, I tell you that you must reioyce. The Prophet *Dauid* expressed the same, when he said, *delight you in our lord, and he will giue you whatsoeuer you shall aske.* This is that ioye, wherewith the most holy virgin reioyced, when she said, *My spirit reioyces in God my Saviour.* And with this ioye, did *Christ our lord* reioyce, when *S. Luke* said, *that Iesus reioyced in the holy Ghost.* And the royall Prophet saith, *that his hart, & euen his flesh reioyced in the lining God.* This happēs whē the soule with the will, (for there the hart signifies the will) are actually louing, & desiring that our lord, may in himselfe bee, what he is. And from the great redundāce, which proceedes sometymes from this ioye, of the soule the very flesh it selfe, is kindled in the loue of our lord. And because this loue, is soe excellent & celestially a thing therefore doth the Church (which is directed by the holy ghost) inuite vs in the begining of

*S. Tho.**1.**2 char.**Pf. 96.**Phil. 4**Pf. 36**Luk. 1.**Luk. 10.**Pf. 83.*

*Mattins*, with a perswasion to loue our Lord saying thus. *Come lett vs reioyce in our Lord, and sing canticles of praise, to God our saluation*

If you will finde the excellency of this loue, put it in practise, & you shall see that the soule doth not satisfy it selfe, but in praying God. For when it sees all that to be accomplished in God, which it can wish, it breakes instantly out into thanks-giuing to him; for hauing perfected the desire it hath to praise him, which is the same effect, which flowes from the loue they haue in heauen, as the Prophet *Dauid* saith, *Blessed are they O Lord, whot dwell in thy howse; for they shall praise thee, for euer, and for euer. S. Augustine* was inflamed with this loue, when speaking to our Lord, he said, *If thou O Lord wert Augustine and I God, I would make thee God, and my selfe Augustine.*

*Psal.*  
8.

I thinke there is noe neede to bring testimonies, which may proue the excellencie of this Loue; for euen plaine reason tells vs, that this is the loue which drawes a man out of him selfe, and transformes him vnto God, who is his beloued. And out of this loue, it must follow that all your workes, and deuotions, and prayers, must be made by you, to the honour and glory of this God, who deserues to be adored, and serued, for his owne pure goodnes, by as many creatures as he hath made; without carrying any respect at all to the hope which might be had of a reward from him. For though it be good, and holy to serue our Lord, euen for

*retribution*, yet is not this an act of *soe* perfect *charity* as that which seekes noe kinde of interest, but onely the honour, and glory of our Lord God. If at any time you place before your soule, the *reward*, which they will giue it, for the good it doth, to the end that it may be animated towards good workes, let not this be your last end, but the will which you haue, to serue our Lord. For the more glory you haue, the more honour and glory shall our Lord God receiue. Soe that the last ayme of all, must be, to glorify our most blessed Lord. And in this manner, if you will, you may *encline your hart to the commandments with respect to the retribution*, as the Prophet *Dauid* said.

*Psal.*  
118.

*Psal.*  
118.

But perhaps you will aske. Who is he that can haue his soule awake to goe euer cheerfull, and in delight, reioycing still in her God; since many tymes shee is *soe tepid*, and *soe sad*, that by noe meanes, she is capable of any ioye? what remedy may then be thought of, that we may not faile of this perfect, and supreme *loue*? For this, it was, that I told you, that you were to carry with you a *desire* whereby you must *wish*, that our Lord might still be what he is in himselfe; because *Charitie* consists in this *desire*. Which *desire* a soule may haue, though it be neuer so tepid, dry, and sad; as a man may desire, that his father may liue happily though himselfe feele noe *ioy*. And herein I onely take for graunted, that we must suppose man to haue the *grace* of God which our Lord will neuer



Gal. 5.

deny to one, who striues to walke by this way. I meane that although your selfe be sadd, you must desire that our Lord may be what he is. And as for the *delight*, and *ioy* in our Lord, which vses to follow heerevpon, this indeede is a *fruite of the holy Ghost*, which growes from this *charitie* when our Lord is pleased to communicate himselfe more familiarly to a soule. When his Maiestie bestowes this fauour let vs blesse him for it; and when he doth not, lett vs yet perseuer in that other exercise of euer blessing and adoring him, who is so worthy of infinite glory, and praise. For it is a very great error, into which they fall, who thinke that when there is noe *sensible ioy*; that act of the will is worth nothing; whereas *Charitie* doth yet consist in that act. And for as much as the deuill knowes this well, he is euer procuring to giue vs great tepidity and drynes; that soe we thinking that we loose our tyme, may giue ouer this holy exercise.

You must therefore perseuer in it, and grow deafe to those temptations of the deuill. For if you perseuer not, you will not arriue to enioy that crowne, and heauen, which such as are proficient in this holy *loue* grow to obtaine, euen heere on earth. You must consider and looke with a hundred thousand eyes, that the end and scope of your *loue* bee to glorifie our Lord in whatsoeuer you doe. For soe great was the wrench

which our *nature* tooke by the sinne of our  
 first father in wholly procuring our owne  
 interest and good that if you stand not well  
 awake in the watch-tower, you will finde  
 many tymes, that you doe but seeke your  
 selfe, euen in this very deuotion, which pre-  
 tends wholly to cast out *selfe-loue*. And you  
 shall take your selfe in the manner, with re-  
 ioycing that you *loue* our Lord, after this sort,  
 because you shall acquire great rewards in  
 heauen thereby, and because your soule  
 receiues much consolation, and for other  
 reasons, of proper interest, which though  
 they be not ill, yet are they acts of *Charity*  
 which is imperfect.

You see heere in short, the *Loue* of God,  
 which you are to carry in your soule; a *Copie*  
 of that Originall which the Blessed Spiritts,  
 haue in heauen. It now remaines that I de-  
 clare to you, the loue of your *neighbour*, which  
 growes out of this other profound *Loue*. The  
*loue*, my good sister, which you must carry  
 to your neighbour must bee, by *desiring* and  
*loving* all that *good*, which you see in  
 him; because thereby, our Lord God is  
 glorified and adored. And the more that is,  
 the greater must your ioy be; as on the other  
 side, any offence or sinne which you shall  
 discouer in your neighbour must be abhorred  
 by your soule, because he is offended, whose  
 honour and glory you desire. And soe as I  
 told you that the loue of God consisted in our

applause, and *will*, that our Lord should be the very thing which he is; and that the *ioye* which is taken thereby is a particular giuft of our Lord; foe also doth the loue of your *neighbour* consist in the application of your *will*, to *desire* the good of your *neighbour*, which is to reioyce in his true good, and to feele much griefe, for the sinne which he committs,

This is a very particular fauour of our Lord, which he bestowes vpon whome he will. So that if you haue obserued the matter well, you will haue scene, that the marke at which both the *loue* of God, and of our *neighbour* shoores is, that God may be glorified and adored. And heereby you will also perceiue how short he falls of true *loue*, who greiues to see his neighbour growne vp apace, in deuotion, and vertue, considering that himselfe is not so growne vp. For though it be true, that the true *louer* of our Lord, will not faile to carry a knife about him, which peirces him through at the very hart, because he serues not our Lord so well as hee ought, and might; yet followes it not from hence, that, by seeing another seruant of God *thriue*, faster in spirit then himselfe, he must therefore be sorry for it or dismayed by it. But rather, the ease, and comfort, which is to serue you for a remedy against that much greife, which your soule receiues, because your selfe doe not serue our Lord, foe well as you should, must be to consider, that though you (through your weakenes) doe not

that, to which you are obliged, yet there are others, who comply with that very thing, which you desire; which is, greatly to glorifie, and serue our Lord.

But as for that other kinde of dismay, to which some are subiect; I conceiue that it growes but from selfe-loue, for it is certaine, that if the end why a true louer of our Lord, desires much to serue him be, that his God may be honoured, and glorified, ( who is glorified, as well by the sanctity, which is in the soule of another, as if it were in his owne ) it followes, that he is to haue much ioy, to see that others goe increasing in the service of our lord, though it be true on the other side, that he may be in paine, because he serues him not soe well.

You see heere my good sister, what that is to which you must attend, in this paradise of the *millitant Church*, ( where our Lord placed you, when he called you to his loue, and to his grace ) if you will also goe on to enioye the fruite which is gathered from his hand, in the *triumphant Church* of his glory. In which I beseech our Lord, that wee all may glorify him, and praise him, and enioye him for all eternitie. Amen.



*A letter of the Authour to a certaine poore man, who was called Iohn of God, He was of Granada; and begged almes for the poore, He animates him to the loue and seruice of poore people; but yet soe as that he must not forgett his owne particular deuotions.*

**I** Haue receiued your letter, and I will not haue you say, that I acknowledge you not for my sonne. For if you say that because you are wicked, you deserue it not; for the same reason, I deserue not to be your father, and therefore I may ill despise you; who am my selfe more worthy to be despised. But since our lord houlds vs all for his, though we be soe miserably weake, it is but reasonable that we learne to be mercifull one towards another, & that we support one another with Charitie, as he doth.

I haue my good brother a great desire that you should be able to giue a good accounte, of that which our lord hath recommended to you. For the good and faithfull seruant must looke to gaine *fine other talents*, to the *fine* which were giuen him at the first. That so, he may heare from the mouth of our lord. *Reioyce thou good and faithfull seruant thou hast beene faithfull in the few things which I haue recommended to thee, and I will place thee ouer many.*

*Math.*  
*25.*

You must take care of that which is re

commended to you concerning others, in such fort, as that you forget not your owne soule. But yet know that the man, who of all others is most recommended to you, is your selfe. For it will profit you but little though you should drawe all the world, out of the durt; if, the while, your selfe remaine therein. And therefore, I once againe encharge you, that still you seeke out some fitt of-tyme, wherein you may dispatch your owne deuotions, and that dayly you heare *Masse*, and vpon euery sunday, the *sermon*. And especially, take heede, that you conuerse not much, with woemen. For you cannot be ignorant; that they be that snare, which the deuill setteth, for the fall of such as serue God. You know how *Dauid* sinned, by looking vpon one of them; and *Salomon*, his *Sonne*, sinned with many, and he walked soe farre out of his witts, as to place *Idolls* in the temple of our Lord. And since we are soe much more weake then they, lett vs be afraid to fall, and take warning by the misfortunes of others. Deceiue not your selfe with saying, *I desire to doe them good*. For vnder the mantle of these good desires, doe those daungers lurke, when prudence accompanyes not the same. And God is farre from desiring, that I should procure the good of another, with the Spiri. all hurt of my selfe.

2. Kings  
11.

1. Kings  
11.

Concerning those temporall necessities to which you are subiect; I haue already written to you, that there is euery where such abundāce of wārs, as that when we aske any releife, they say



that they haue enough more neere at hand, whome they are to remedy. And I thought that my Lord the Duke of Sessa had sent you that, which might serue the turne, because they could me, you had sollicitied him for some releife. If he haue not done it, desire it of him a second tyme, for he will send it. He loues you much, for the care you haue of the poore, and if he doe not, our Lord will prouide, though hee make you stay a while.

I haue reioyced much in the charitie which you haue found, in that other house, whereof you speake. Returne my salutations to him, who sent them by you to mee. And because I am now in my iourney, I write noe more at this tyme; but onely that you must remaine all fixed in *Iesus Christ* our Lord, who will protect and fauour you. And that you looke well to your selfe, and that the deuill may haue noe cause to reioyce by hauing induced you to sinne, but that God may take delight in your penance for that which is past, & in your amendment for that which is to come; And soe the holy ghost be with you. Amen.



*A letter to one whoe had some desires to serue God but not the courage to beginn. He animates her greatly to confide in God. He teaches her how to loue certaine persons who had offended her, and hee giues remedies both against scruples, and vaine glorie.*

**I** doe much reioyce, at the holy desires which you haue to please our lord, but I am in paine to consider your pusillanimitie, in executing the same. For I should it to be a strange ill thing, that one should presume to remaine in the vanitie of this life, and not presume to adventure vpon the making of a new match with God, confiding in the same God. For what mā was there euer, since there were such things in the world as men, who hoping in God, and procuring to liue according to his comaundments, was forsaken by him? whoe euer inuoked him, with an intyre, and perseuering hart, and was not heard by him? Nay he goes seeking vs, and inciting vs to serue him. What possibilitie therefore is there, but that since he is good, and true of his word, he must come forth to meete, and cast his armes a bout our neckes, and doe vs fauour, when we make towards him. He wil, infallibly he wil, and that incomparably more completely, as *S. Paule* *Heb. 9* affirmes, then we know how to thinke.

Beginne you seruant of God, cast your selfe

vpon him, and confide, that he whoe gaue you the desire, will giue you strength to worke, & courage to make an end. For he calls not vpon such as sleepe to wake them, but to the end that he may doe them many fauours, when they are awake. Beginne with diligence, and feruour, yea and with a kinde of strife; for there is not a worse thing then a faint beginner, who still takes much care to regale him selfe, & to content the world. Shut your eyes, against both humaine prayses, & dispraises, for you shall quickly see both the prayser, and the praised, turned in to dust, and ashes, and him alsoe whoe is honoured, and dishonoured. An wee shall all be presented, before the tribunall of our lord, where *the mouth of wickednes shall be stopped*, and vertue shall be highly exalted. In the meane tyme lay you fast hould on the Crosse, & follow him whoe was dishonoured, and lost his life vpon it for you. And hide your selfe in those woundes, that when our lord comes for you, he may finde you there; and may beautifie you with his graces, and may giue him selfe to you as your reward, for hauing left all things, and your selfe with them for his sake.

But ô how little doth he leaue, who euen leaues all! since he leaues but that which he must quickly leaue whether he will or noe, yea and euen the enioying it, is a great misery; since all that which is not God, is but waight, and sorrow to the soule. God onely, is sufficiēt for you, open therefore your hart, and enioye him, you

shall finde him moie sweete, & much more full of loue, then you could haue thought.

Sometymes I wonder within my selfe, to thinke how one either doth or can wish ill to another, since Christ our lord is in the middelt betweene them both. How can he be disgusted with the body, who loues or ought to loue the head? doe you not know that when our lord rose from death to life, & appeared to his disciples, he placed him selfe in the midst of them, and not at the head or els where. And this vpon what reason, but to make vs vnderstand that he is in the midst of vs, and that we cannot doe, yea or euen desire to hurt any body, but that first it must passe through him. He who loues not his neighbour, loues not Christ our lord, and as for him whoe loues not Christ our lord it were better for such a one not to haue bene borne, since he arriues not to know for what he was created, which was to loue our lord.

Like.  
24.

Conceiue that your neighbours are a certaine thing which mecrely cōcernes Christ our lord, that they are his Images, and the creatures for which he gaue his blood. And therefore say, *How shall I wish ill to him, whom my lord loue? How shall I be able to desire death to him, to whom my lord will giue life. My lord dyed for these persons, and would yet againe returne to dye for them, if it were needefull; and shall I then faile to loue that man, who is soe much beloued by him? what doth it import mee, if they doe me ill offices, for I loue them not for what they are, nor for any thing which they doe to mee;*

I loue them for Christ's sake; and what then haue their ill deedes to doe, towards the making me take that loue from them, which I carried to them, for Christ's sake. I beseech God they may be great in his presence & that they may enioy him, and be them that see there may be more temples, wherein my lord may dwell, more soules which may praise and serue him, and more harts which may loue him, for he deserues them all. And whensoever you see them say. O lord doe thou possesse those soules, and lett them be onely thine. O lord lett them enioye thee, for thou hast a minde to communicate thy selfe to all. O lord they are soe many Images of thee, make them like to thee more and more, & both to them & mee, & to all giue pardon, grace, & glory. If your tongue will not say this, yet let your spirit say it, and lift vp your hart to our lord, demaunding succour of him and saying. O lord for thy loue and not for theirs, and by little and little, you shall finde your selfe in peace. And if there chance to be any warre, bee not ouercome therein, and doe not say, or doe any thing which may be against their good, and consent not to any thing in your hart which be of disaduantage to them.

The scruples concerning your cōfessions, are a temptation wherewith the deuill tormētts you, & depriues you of the sweetenes of your soule, and leaues you without gust in the things of God. For the creature who is scrupulous, is not fit either to loue God, or to confide in him, nor doth he like the way which God houlds with him, and then he goes to looke other wayes,

which may please him selfe better, because he findes not that, in Gods wayes, which gives him gult. And this scrupulous person hath the fault of all, for he raises the storme, where there was a calme, and hee found it in his owne way, and not in the way of God, which is very smooth and plaine.

Make you a Iest of such things, & submit your selfe to that which, your ghostly-father shall ordaine; & be not carryed away with scruples, nor with your owne conceipt, but say, *my lord God is not scrupulous, I doe that which they commaunde me in his name, and I am to accounte to him for noe more.* Shall I be plaine with you make hast, make hast to loue, and these scruples will fall away, which rise but from a fearefull hart. *For perfect loue casts feare out of doores.* Pray to our lord & say *Deus meus illumina tenebras meas.* And confide you in his mercie, that serving him he will be good to you, and will dayly be giuing you to vnderstand your faults, that you may mend them.

I would alsoe haue you laugh at the temptation of vaine glory, and say to it. *Neither will I doe it, nor leaue to doe it, for thee. O lord to thee it is, that I offer what soeuer I can doe, or say, or thinke.* And when, vaine glorie comes againe, say to it thus. *Thou comest too late, for it is already giuen to God.* It is a good aduise, that beginners are to doe nothing exteriorly which may seeme to be of much sanctity, for being younge and tender and all their busines being but yet in

[ohn. 4  
17.  
17.



flower, the winde will doe them hurt; and it is better for them to hide their graces, then to shew them. And soe must you doe for as much as possibly you can; and that which you cannot conceale, doe freely and without feare. And strait cast vp your hart to our Lord, and say, *Non nobis Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam.* Or els you may say, *Gloria Patri, & Filio, & Spiritui sancto.*

And for conclusion, I recommend to you, that you cast all that out of your hart, which is not God, and that in this world you loue teares, solititude, humilitie, and penance; and lett your eyes be euer turned to our Lord, *that your feete may be deliuered from the snare.* Put the law of God in practise, and you shall see how he will sweeten your way, and how he will cast your enemies vnder your feete. And by working you shall grow to vnderstand that, which you knowe not how to conceaue, either by speaking or hearing. For in this way of God, these tepid and talking people learne little, and they whoe are diligent in putting the hand to worke learne much. Our Lord *Iesus Christ* goes before you, follow him heere with your Crosse; and one day you shall be with him in heauen.



*A Letter of the Authour to a freind whom he animates to serue God in good earnest. He shewes the Vanity and misery of the world, and the happines which is obtained by seruing God.*

**A**S he, whoe hoping for the good successe of what he desires, reioyces when he sees some likelyhood thereof; and although that likelyhood be not very great yet it giues him noe little ioye, through the excelsse, of his desire: soe my soule is filled with comfort by your Letter; for me thinkes the wordes conteyned therein, giue me a hope and taste of somewhat which hath reason to make mee gladd, and which if it might once take full effect, would breede a ioy in mee soe very great, as would be equalled by few others.

My good Sir, I desire to see that soule of yours vnbeguiled and discharged from the many vanities, which are affected, and frequented in this world; and that you would beleue with a faithfull hart, that your true repose consists not in any other, then in him whoe created all things, & that you would goe vp and downe full of care, in search after this good, and be soe wounded, with the loue of him, that

all this world, with the beauty and flower thereof, might seeme but a sinoake to you, which vanishes, as a shaddow which hath noe bulke or body, and indeede a meere deice, how to make men fooles, working such as loue it, to be the enemyes of God, and to preferre the temporall before the eternall.

Was there euer scene any mischeife soe great as this? was there euer scene, any exchange soe pernicious as this? where are those eyes, which see not this? and that hart which hath noe feeling of this? And yet soe great is our frailtie, that if Christ our Lord did not awake vs, and make vs vnderstand this truth, it would be noe more possible for vs to be deliuered from error, and deceite then it is possible, in nature for a blinde man, to see, or a dead man, to liue. O thou miserable man, who art worthy to be lamented with a flood of teares! who art soe vehemently inslyned to that which hurts thee most, and yet conceiuest withall, that it is good for thee. Thou thinkest that all hath gone well, and that thou art growne happy, when thou art accommodated with the things of this life, and thou hast hardly any feeling, nor doest thou thinke it worth the lamenting, to be in enmity with almightie God. Thou knowest how to regard, and value the honour of this world, which passeth away, at sea-full speede, yea and euen whilest it lasts, it makes not the owner thereof, one haire bredth the better, in the high presence of God; and thou hast noe care at all

whether thou be honoured or dishonoured, in the Court of that diuine Maiestie. Thou fearest some little affront, which heere may threaten thee; but thou seekest for noe remedy, against that huge affront, which is reserued and threatened at the latter day, to all such as shall not haue done honour to our Lord, with a liuely faith, and true obedience. Thou makest much account of thy selfe, and little of almightie God, for thou fulfillest thine owne will, in dispight of his. And any trifle which concernes thy self, offends thee much; and, the while, thou hast noe care at all, of that which highly concernes the honour of God. Thou liuest after thine owne fashion, that thou maist be wholly miserable; and thou liuest not as God would haue thee, whose is supreme felicity.

One of these two things is infallibly true. Either that the light of the holy ghost, must be that which vrges & enforces this blindnes vpon vs, which cannot be, or els, that the great torment, which is prouided for sinne will, one day, open the eyes of such deceiued persons, when there will be noe remedy for their misery. For as *S. Gregory* saith, *The eyes which sinne shuts, paine opens.* And therefore Sir, if you loue your soule, if you feare almightie God, if your hart be not of flint, looke carefully vpon the shortnes of this life, and how many you haue knowne, whose being well accommodated and supported heere, God hath commaunded to goe hence, and that not with so much contentment and ioy, as they

would haue wished, but complaining that the world had deceiued the, & that for loue thereof, they had neglected the seruice of our Lord. That which they were, wee are, & where they be arriued, we shall arriue, and the same earth must receiue vs all, & conuert vs all into it selfe.

For what therefore doe we stay? By what are wee deteyned? What is that, which deceiues vs, and makes vs soe profoundly carelesse, of a busines which soe highly importes? What makes vs thinke that it concernes vs little, notwithstanding that noe other thing imports vs, at all, in comparison of this? And if wee shall confesse, that we hould it to be highly important, why then doe wee labour soe little for it? why doe wee spend soe few howers about it? Why doe we try soe few conclusions to obtaine it? why doe we aske soe little aduise, how we may contriue it: Is it reason that any little sitt of tyme, which wee employ about this busines, should seeme soe great a matter, whereas yet wee neuer thinke much, and be neuer weary, how much soeuer tyme we spend vpon the busines of this world? If any question be moued, about expence to be made vpon some present occasion of vanitie, how magnificent are we wont to shew our selues: but how miserly, on the other side, in any thing which it concernes vs to doe for the honour of God, and the good of our neighbours. In that former case noe consideration is had, either of children, or prouision otherwise for the howse,

but all that, is laid aside, for the respect which is had to some curiosity. But in the latter, such a heape of considerations, & reasons are brought into discourse, as serue to shutt the purse, and to tye vp the hands from that good worke.

But what shall I say of this other prooffe of our frailty? Our whole life proclaimeth with a loud voyce, that wee value the present world, more then the future; the exteriour, then the interiour; riches, then goodnes. For that thing doe we loue best, which we desire most to obtaine, when we want it, and which we labour to gett with most anxiety; & wherein wee ioye most when wee haue it, and for which wee sorrow most when wee loose it. And if the case arriue, wherein we must loose the one or the other, we put our good conscience in hazard, for putting that in executiō, which the honour, or profit or pleasure of this world suggests.

The day will come, and that quickly, when those worldly persons will finde themselves straungely disappointed, and hauing lost all their labours, and leauing the fruites heereof behind them they shall be presented all naked and poore, and in the extremity of confusion, before him, who sent them hither, not to the end that they should goe fooling after vanities, but that they might passe through these temporall things, without staying or setting their harts vpon them, and that hauing their bodies heere vpon earth, their soules might be aspiring to heavenly things. And that though they



liue in flesh; yet they should not liue according to the desires thereof, and though they dwell in the world, yet not to haue the conditions of the world; but that like children who imitate their father, they might be pure and true, and pious, and humble, and meeke, and that they might seeke after the glory of God, & the good of their neighbours.

What will hee be able to doe at that day, who shall not haue performed the thing, for which he was sent, into this world? what will he be able to doe, by whose thought it hath not soe much as passed, that he must once beginne to attend to it, but who forgetting the purity, and perfection of a christian life, whereby hee was to imitate almighty God, hath defiled himselfe, in the mudd of earth, and hath proceeded like some foolish boy, who, being sent about busines, would needes stay to passe his tyme, and play with other boyes; or els loyter for seeing of some vaine show, and neither did that which he was commaunded, nor soe much as remembred where about, he went, till returning home at night, without any answeare concerning his busines, he is receiued with reprehensions, and stripes, by him who sent him.

Let vs awake, whilest wee haue tyme, and lett vs haue an eye to that which imports vs most, and which is to last for euer. And lett vs leaue vanity to vaine persons; for both it, and they shall perish. Let vs raise our eyes towards him, who gaue vs the life and being, which wee

haue; and afterwards gaue his owne life, to the end that we might not loose ours. And with great labour he taught vs the way, whereby we were to walke; and by a death which was full of torments, and reproaches, did he encourage and strengthen vs towards the purchase of vertue; and he obteyned grace for vs, whereby we might be able to serue, and please almightie God.

Lett vs search into the most hidden corners of our harts, and lett vs cure that in it, which is wounded. Lett vs vntye the fetters of our sinnes. Let vs procure to redresse our selues in that which giues vs most cause of feare. And let vs appease the clamorous remorse of our Conscience, with doing that which God commands by the Dictamen thereof, that soe all things being once well ordered, and agreed, we may like true and watchfull seruants expect the coming of our Lord, and that we may be found *with tapers lighted in our hands, and with our loynes girt, and that we may heare that sweete word. Reioyce thou good and faithfull seruant, whoe hast bene faithfull in lesser things; I will place thee ouer greater. Enter thou into the ioy of thy Lord,*

LUK. 12  
Matth.  
25.

That is the daye for which good christians hope, and in cōtemplation whereof, they, who liue heere in paine, doe in tyme passe through it, with much patience. And this expectation of that crowne, giues them hart, to endure the combatts of this world, and of the flesh. Making election of abasement heere, for that eter-

nall aduancement; and of this short lamentation, For that delight, which shall haue noe end; of loosing their will heere that they may haue it euerlastingly vnited to the will of God, in heauen. Where they shall haue nothing which may disgust them, but all that shall be done, which may content them. For they shall possesse almightie God, as their most rich treasure, in whome is conteyned all Good.

If our Lord haue yet begunne to visit that soule of yours, you will vnderstand what I say, and you will profitt by it. If not ( which God forbidd ) it will be but the hearing of a story, which is instantly forgotten. I desire that Christ our Lord, may be the *Loue* of you, and of my lady your wife, whose desire to see mee, I pray God reward. But thinke no more of your coming this way, till first God shall haue soe disposed, that I may goe thither to you, the rather because I alsoe desire, that it may be soe.



*A letter to an afflicted lady whose sicknes hindered certaine deuotions which shee had beene wont to vse. He teaches her how to finde peace, and true repose which is noe where but in God. And of the great care, wherewith she was to provide that the forbearance which she vsed of her exercises of spirit in her sicknes, might not proceede from tepiditie.*

**T**HE best comfort in those afflictions which come vpon vs against our will, is, not to haue committed any fault; which might occasion their coming. For a conscience which stands right, will easily beare any weight which you can lay vpon it, but to a conscience which is impure, any little burden is intollerable. If men knew as well how to seeke the meanes of true repose, as they know how to desire the thing, they should enioye it, and not remaine with the sole desire thereof. It is the expresse lawe of God, that they who haue desires of any other thing then him, shall be subiect to torment, whether the thing be obteyned or not obteyned. For supposing the thing be had which they desired, yet can they not compleatly enioye it, through the remorse which their conscience brings, and if it can nor be had, they are racked by the delay of the thing desired.

Psal.

104.

The pure desire of God, is very contrary to this. For if *Dauid* say, *Let the hart reioyce, which goes but euen in search of God*, what kinde of thing will it be to finde him out? If the hunger of seeking giue them ioye, what will the being satisfied, at that table, doe? He therefore who desires to finde peace, and true repose, must resolute to forgoe his owne appetites, & must boldly and faithfully lodge himself in the will of our Lord; and soe he shall neither be tumbled vp and downe in the darke, nor be afflicted otherwise, by the arriual of strange euent.

Psal.

4.

But who will now procure that the sonnes of men may attend to that, which God exacts at their hands? *How longe will you be beauiy baited, and lone vanity, and serke after lyes?* who shall vnbequile such men, and free them from their blindness as goe seeking peace and finde warre, yea and by the same way wherein they seeke it, they loose it. Let the whole world vnderstand once for all, that as there is noe more then one God, soe is there noe more then one true repose. And as, without the true God, there is noe God; soe out of his repose, there is noe repose. *Certainely the mountaines were lyers, and soe was the multitudes of the valleys, and onely in our Lord God there is true saluation.* This say they, whose after they are well wearied vpon the experience of their owne vaine desires, arriue to know at length, both what God is, and what hee is to them who seeke him.

Madam, we haue not in our house a bitt of bread,

bread, which wee may giue our freind to eate, who is coming from abroad vnlesse we goe borrow it of our neighbour, who is God made man, and one who withall is soe neere vs; as that he is our head, and both our *father* and our *brother*. He who will lift his eyes vp to him, and depend vpon his hand; he who will be a begger at his gate; he who will be in desire of him and growe euen fainte through hunger after him, shall be refreshed by the abundance of him, which doth as farre exceede the satisfaction which creatures giue, as God him selfe exceedes them. But out of God, lett noe man presume to haue any hunger. For as *S. Augustine* saith *where soeuer flesh and bloud shall expect to finde a fulnes amongst the creatures, it will finde it selfe deceived*. Soe that a man may vnderstand by experience what difference there is betweene the Creatour and the creatures, and soe being vn-tyed from them, (since in them he found not what he sought,) he may goe at last with an intyre hart to him; who alone is able to impart more to the soule, then it is able to receiue. Your ladyship must not therefore be carryed away, by that great errour which yet is imbraced by many great ones of this world, who are mightily affected to their owne will, and who abound with particular appetites; and who thinke belike, that they are to abound as much more then others; in desire of things, as they are heere of more eminent ranke & state; but for my part I see not what they gather from



hence, but greater torments. For after the rate of the desire, is the paine. And as S. Bernard saith, *Let our proper will cease, and there will noe more be any hell.* And soe wee may say, let this proper will cease, and there will not be in the world, either any sinne or any sorrow. For that which comes to vs, is not, in it selfe, the thing which giues vs paine, but the coming of it, when we would not haue it come. And therefore doth God require our hearts of vs, that soe hee may free them from many miseries, and may giue vs in exchaunge, his owne, which is peaceable, reposed and ioyfull in tribulation. And a grosse foole is hee, who had rather liue in his owne straitnes, then in the latitude of Almighty God; and who had rather dye in him selfe, then liue, in life. And if at any tyme, or in any thing, we haue committed this sinne, and haue enlarged the raynes to our owne desires, let vs humble our selues before the father of mercies, acknowledging our sinnes, and hoping for pardon at his hands, and taking that paine which grew vpon vs, by the inordinatenes of our appetite, towards the discounting and discharging of our fault. For by this meanes, God is wont to take away our sinnes like one who should take the boughes or branches of a tree, and setting them first on fire, should apply them afterwards, to the tree it selfe, and soe burne it vpp, by the rootes.

Much better it is for a sinner, that hee

should grow into paine by occasion of his sinne, then into peace and rest. For as S. *Augustine* saith, *there is not a more wofull thing then the temporall felicitie of a sinner.* And as for vs let vs learne heereafter, to giue all our desires to God. And as a stone falls downeward, and as fire flyes vpward, and as euery thing in fine, makes towards his proper place; soe let our harts fly at full speede, towards the center thereof, which is God.

Who would not be amased, to behould a great rocky Mountaine hanging loose in the ayre, without falling downe to his proper place; and who will not wonder to see a hart which was created to repose, and rest in God, detain it selfe, in the ayre, and lesse then ayre? Therefore whether it be that wee cannot take true rest in any other then in God, or because this Lord of ours, deserues, of himselfe, all our loue, (since he is the loadestone to which all spiritts looke) let vs not fall heereafter, into such a folly, as that whereof I spake, lett vs not spott our honour, let vs not committ such a treason against such a lord, as that heereafter, any other desire may enter into our harts, but of him, or for the loue of him. And soe will the sadd cloudes of these vnprofitable hart-breaking melancholies, and these both vaine hopes & vaine feares fly from these harts of ours, & in their place a new morning will rise, which will giue vs Ioy. For to see the light of heauē, is the cause of Ioy, but the blinde

*Iob 5.* man cannot discern it. For this did *Iobias* say, *what ioy cann I haue in this life, since I cannot see the light of heauen.* It is a great truth, that noe man who is not indeede vnbequiled concerning this world, can haue any true ioy of hart, for though he thinkes hee sees, yet indeede it is but a sight of earth, and not a light of heauen. But after this other sight a man growes cured at the very roote.

It will be fitt that your ladyshipp doe not thinke, to make the like exercises of minde, in the way of spiritt as before, now that you are subiect to an vnlike disposition of body. And many haue ignorantly afflicted them selues, for not hauing beene able to weigh, what their strength and state would permitt. It is cleere that with this condition of body wherein you are, you must not thinke of keeping the same method which you held before; nor doth our lord aske any such things at your hands, since his will is very wise, and tempered alsoe with great mercie, and demands nothing of vs, but that, for which hee giues vs meanes; And not onely hee will not reape where he doth not sowe, but euen when hee sowes, he is content to reape lesse, then hee hath sowed. Your ladyshipp must not be discōforted for that which you are not able to performe, for you might as well put your selfe to paine, because you haue noe wings where with to flye. Doe not place the ioye of your hart vpon hauing consolation, or vpon making Prayer, but vpon the ac-

complishment of the will of our Lord. And since his pleasure is, that the tyme which before you spent in praying shall now be spent in vomiting, let it be soe in the name of God; and lett his contentement be ours, and lett vs more esteeme that he be pleased, then we would to possesse heauen and earth. And if we be troubled with any scruple, that such or such a punishment came to vs for our hauing committed such, or such a sinne, and that God chastises vs now for the thing which wee inordinately desired before; in that case, what haue we more to doe then to cast our selues at his feete, desiring both correction and pardon. And our lord will either giue them both, or els the pardon, without the correction, but neuer the correction, without the pardon, if the fault be not our owne. We must therefore take any tribulation, as an earnest penny, or introduction to peace; and prouided that there may be peace betweene God & vs, let any thing come which he will send.

One onely thing wee haue to feare in this case, which is least wee should slubber ouer our negligences, vnder this occasion and pretence, of, *I can doe noe more*. Wee must heere looke vpon our selues with many eyes; for this EVE, which liues within vs, is soe desirous to be cherished, and regaled, and to be walking vp and downe the garden, and to be eating of the forbidden fruite, that she wants not a thousand inuentiōs to make reason beleeeue, that she demaunds not

any thing of superfluity, but of meare necessitie, and she is in a mightie chafe if they beleieve her not. Madam there is neede heere of two things; The one that when wee clerely see, that wee are able in such cases, to performe our spirituall exercises, wee must not omitt them, by any meanes. Be not faint in labouring for the loue of our lord, since true loue knowes not, what it is to be remisse, & as you are to be compassionate, & pious towards your beloued, soe are you to be seuerer, and nothing delicate towards your selfe. Your ladyship shall doe well to call to minde, what heroicall acts the loue of Christ our lord hath wrought in this world, in those harts where it hath dwelt. It hath made them endure prisons, torments, dishonours, and that with much ioy, whilest the great worth of the *beloued* hath beene placed before the eyes of the *louer*. And since it hath wrought soe great effects in others, let it not be soe weake in your ladyshipp, as that it cannot enable you to passe through a little affliction, for the pleasing of soe high a Lord; by whom you shall be soe much the better accepted, as you shall come to him with more affliction. Yet soe, as that our Lord is not desirous of our paine, but onely of our loue, but yet it is still true withall, that the truth of loue is hardly knowne, but in somewhat which puts vs to paine. *For the freind who stands fast in tyme of tribulation, he is the true freind indeede.* And though God doe well know, what wee are, without

making any particular experiment, yet he loues to trye vs, that wee may know it too; that soe wee may haue comfort in finding our selues faithfull to him, in point of loue; and soe may liue in hope, that wee shall goe to enioye our beloued for *Patience breedes Hope*, as S. Paule *Rom. 5.* faith.

So that this must be your method, till you haue perfect health, that when you are free from your vomitts & paines, you may exercise your minde in spirituall things; and at those tymes you must alsoe beseech our Lord, to giue you light to know, when it is the flattery of flesh and blood, and when it is Iust necessitie, which hinders you. For he who vses the knowledge well which he hath, shall obtaine light, for that which he knowes not. But as for others, with what face can they aske new light, since it may be answered them thus, *why desirest thou to know further, what my will and pleasure is, since in that which thou knowest already, thou complyest not.* And when you are in any ease, though it bee not much, let your mind alsoe bee in some exercise of spirituall things though it be not much, nor with much attention, but onely recording your desires, and presenting your selfe before our Lord. And by this, and withall by not letting your hart sincke (for euen the very life of the soule consists in that) your ladyship shall passe on, vntill that God provide otherwise.



Iohn.

4.

The woman of *Samarita* asked where she was to pray, and our Lord answered her, *that it was euery where to be done, and that in spiritt.* And soe is the christian to doe, who in all his workes, is to pray to our Lord, not in the mountaine or in the temple alone, but in eating, drinking and sleeping, in health and in sicknes, referring all to God, and ioying in all things because he receiues them from that holy hand.

Sap. 7.

Your ladyship is to haue great care, that you straighten not the goodnes of God, since he is immense. Doe not thinke that you are to seeke him, and to finde him but onely in such an expresse place, or determinate worke. He is euery where, and you are with him, and if you seeke him euery where, you shall euery where be sure to finde him. *I reioyced (saith the wise man) in all things, because this wisdom was before mee.* And soe doth hee alsoe reioyce, whoe in all things behoulds God, performing that which he commaunds, and euer keeping the hart in attention towards him, and from the contrary flowes sadnes, and disgust, and deiection of minde, which is a thing to be auoyded, with much diligence. For (as it is written), *There is no profit in such sadnes.* Nay it brings much hurt both to our body & to our soule, and to our neighbour. Whereas ioy, and comfort giue strength, and perseuerance makes our spirituall enemies grow sadd, it cherishes the spirit of God, which dwells in such as are his seruants, *For his spiritt in cheerefull.*

Eccl.

30.

Besides this, your ladyship shall doe well to receiue the *Body* of our Lord, now and then, And since the lodging which he takes vp, is in the hart, you are not to be in paine, for that your body is noe better. And though there may be some impediment, why wee cannot labour, yet there can be none, why wee may not *loue*. So much the more must wee loue our Lord, because hee is both omnipotent, and very desirous to giue strength to that hart which seekes to loue him, for this tends to the accomplishment of that very thing, which he likes best of all others both in heauen and earth, and that is *Loue*. Wherewith I desire that your ladyship may soe abound on earth, that you may deserue to be lodged neere our Lord in heauen.  
Amen.



*A Letter of the Author to a Lady, whome he had greatly in charge, and who feared, her selfe to be troublesome to him. He takes all feare from her, and animates her to perseuer in the way of vertue, which she had begun; and aduises her to the seruice of her neighbours, as a good meanes, whereby she might obtaine the giift of Contemplation.*

**I**F you knew how great ioy I haue felt in my soule, by your letters, I belecue you would write often to mee, how carefull soeuer the deuill might be, to discourage you. And if you knew how great fauour you doe mee, in letting me see, that you are cōfident of my truth to you, and if withall you would be pleased to make tryall of mee, I belecue you would cast away a great number of those imaginations, which the deuill brings to you, about the making you thinke, that you are troublesome to mee. I, for my part, haue not taken vpon me so in iest, that charge of you, which our lord hath put into my hands, as that any difficulty could make me weary of it, how great soeuer it might bee; and how much lesse can I bee weary, when the thing it selfe is not painefull to mee, but delightfull. I beseech you, for the loue of our lord, that you will aske him, whether I loue you or noe. For I hope for soe much fauour at his hands, as that he will tell you I doe, forasmuch

as he is a freind of truth, and hee knowes that the thing, indeede, is foe. Doe you not already vnderstand, that this is but a trick of the deuill, whereby he would pull downe weake persons? Doe you not know, how much hurt this conceite doth to some of your neighbours, when they beleue it? you know well enough, how to chide them, who will not conceiue, that they are beloued by their freinds, and how to take the part of such as are absent. But now why take you not that counsaile for your selfe, which you giue to others? why will you needes tire me out, with your incredulitie, as others doe? For the loue of him, who was crucified for vs, let not things passe in this manner; but be confident that our lord loues you, and imparts true loue to mee, for the doing of all that, which is necessary for you; & that this must last till you shall haue gayned the crowne, to which our lord hath called you: which is not to be any little one, nor doe I finde in my selfe, any little ioy, that I am helping you to gaine the same.

You must alsoe forbear, both to say, and thinke, that the state wherein you are, is a state of condemnation. For that is a meere temptation of the deuill, who desires nothing more, then that you may leaue your manner of life, that foe, he may carry you away with him. And if it seeme to you, that you haue not that *recollection*, which you ought, for my part I am glad that you desire it, and sigh for it. But

Gen. 29

yet you must not doe it soe, as withall to conceiue, that you are not pleasing to God, in doing what you doe. Many tymes men serue God more, whilst they haue noe recollectiō, (soe that yet withall, they procure it); then with hauing it. For sometymes, yea and many tymes, the pleasure of God is that, to the end wee may vse Charitie to his children, we shall forsake the sweetenes of attending to himselfe alone. And the Patriarch Iacob was enamoured of Rachell, who was faire, & he serued seauen yeares, that they might giue her to him, for his wife; and at the end thereof, they gaue him Lia, the sister of Rachell, against his liking. And when he complayned thereof, they tould him, that it was not the fashion of that country, to bestow their youngest daughters first, as he desired. But they wished him to marry this other at that tyme, and that if indeede he loued the yonger as much as he said, he should labour seauen years more for that, and then they would alsoe giue her to him, and this hee did, and soe he obeyned her.

Hee who hath a minde to giue himselfe, as it were, in marriage to the beautifull *life of recollection* and *deuout prayer*, desires that which is very good. But he must bestow himselfe in marriage, to the *life of action*, and labour. And first hee must employ himselfe vpon the good of his neighbours, and afterwards by perseuerance, he shall obtaine the other, when our Lord shall finde it fitt for him. But in the meane tyme hee is contented with vs, if we will sigh for this, and if we

will attend to that. Neither is he in the right, who is gladd of busines, and employments; neither yet is that other in the right, whoe when he is in the middest thereof, goes still complayning. But he alone complies with that which God commands, whoe bestowes his hands, and workes vpon the seruice of his neighbours; and his desires vpon the seruice of our Lord, with more recollection. Yet still I say, not soe farre, as that this desire must make him complaine, or be disgusted. But he must haue patience in his busines; and in his desire and loue, he must haue quietnes; his hands in one of them, and his eyes, vpon the other. He obeys in the one, and he sues for the other. And as I haue said else where, God serues himselfe of some, in the first *life of labour*, rather then in the second *life of repose*; because wee vse to disguise that desire, which indeede we haue to be at liberty, and to follow our owne will, & not to be put to endure the impertinences, and vexations of others. vnder the colour of giuing our selues to *Contemplation*.

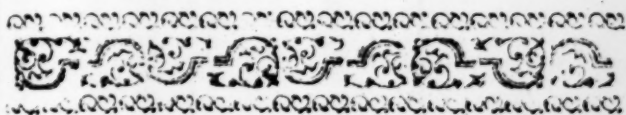
Our Lord therefore, who knowes soe much better, then our selues, what is good for vs, and sees that the desires of our hart some tymes are such; as I haue said, hath care to conduct our life, according to that which he iudges to import vs most. And soe, his seruants must yeilde obedience to him and accept of that, with thankes-giuing, which he imparts. And if any man confesse, that the employment which he hath, is good, but that hee, for his part, is weake, and



that he serues not God therein soe well as he ought, or as he would; I acknowledge that he saith true; and I desire, that he will beleeue and say soe still. For woe be to that soule, which presumes to thinke, that he may contelt with God, any other way, then by begging mercie.

Know you, your selfe, for wicked, and God will wrapp you vp warme in the mantie of his goodnes, and mercie. And euery day, he will growe, in doing you greater fauours. And conceiue, that (such as you are euen now,) our lord vouchsafes to like, and loue you, but see that you must continue in the warre without turning your backe to his seruice, and then youst must esteeme that both hee and I are contented with you. And since both your father who is in heauen, and your spirituall father who is on earth, are contented, with you; you must alsoe be contented with your selfe. Not soe, as that you may giue ouer, to proceede, and profitt in the seruice of our lord, but that you may not be discouraged, or dismayed, in the manner of life which now you hould. And dee you alsoe confidently beleeue, that our Lord is serued, by your abode where you are; and this I declare to you, in his name; and that he will comfort you much, and vouchsafe to doe you very great fauours. And remember this word well. Be faithfull to God, and turne not your backe towards him. Beleeue not the counsaile of the deuill, nor yet of

flesh and bloud. Be bould to trust, and to offer your selfe to dye for God; rather then to forbear what you haue begunne. For you shall quickly see, how well God deales with them, who stand fast in fighting for his honour. The holy ghost be your conseruer, and comforter. Amen.



*A Letter to a deuout freind of his, wherein he shewes how weake, man is without God, and how full of strength when he is placed in the hidden part of his face, and what this face is.*

THE peace of our Lord be euer with you. Soe great is our weakenes, and soe crafty and strong are they who wage warre against vs, that it is noe maruaile, if some tymes we be ouercome, but it is rather strange if we ouercome at any tyme. Or rather in very deede wee neuer ouercome, but Christ our lord ouercomes in vs, who is the *strong lyon of iuda*, and whoe if he should leaue vs,

*Apoc.*  
5.

Psal.

17.

Ibidem.

Cant. 2

Psal.

30.

we were instantly to be swallowed vp, as *David* saith. But he forsakes vs not, because he loues vs, and especially such as place their hope in him, as the same *David* saith, *Thou art the defender of all such as hope in thee.* And if at any tyme he hide himselfe from vs; it is not because he departs; but like a Iealous spouse, he stands looking through the cranyes, to see what that soule is doing, when he hath absented his imbracements from her. Especially he considers, if the soule haue lost her confidence, which his desire is may remaine soe rooted in our harts, that noe winde of tēptation may pluck it vp, but may rather strengthen and settle it; beleeuing that how much more we are tempted, soe much more we are beloued by him and how much more we are persecuted by our enemies so much more are we cherished by almighty God, whose care and vigilancy is incomparably more for our defence; then the subtilty of our enemies can be for our preiudice. The cause heercof is, for that he loues vs more, then the deuill abhorres vs and he is more powerfull then our flesh is fraile, and he hath a blessed place of retreat; wherein as in a most secure haue, and as in the bosome of a mother, he giues harbour, to such as being wearyed with the tempest of tribulations endured for his sake, haue recourse to him. Of this *David* said, *Thou shall hide vs in the hidden parte of thy face;*

Doe you not thinke. O my beloued brother, that you shall be well hidden and secure, and ioyfull in the face of God? But you wil aske,

why

why it is called a hidden part. Certainly with great reason. For as the face of God is not darke but bright according to his diuinitie, so yet the face of Christ our Lord, as God and man, is said to be darke and hidden, according to his humanity. But this not when *his face shined like the Sonne, in Mount Tabor, and his garments like the light*; but when he was disfigured vpon Mount Caluary; when his garments and flesh were dyed redd with the blood which proceeded from him, as the price of our redemption. If you well consider his face, growne yellow with his long fasting, and redd with the buffetts and swelling, which their blowes had made; & full of teares descending from his eyes, & of blood distilling from his crowne of thornes, you will be sure to say, that his *face was hidden*, he of whom *Dauid* saith, *that he was fayre beyond the sonnes of men, and that grace was diffused through his lipps, and that therefore our Lord did blesse him for all eternity.*

Certainely, the most beautifull of men, was hidden, and more tormented then man euer was; and soe farre disfigured, that *Esay* saith, *He hath noe beauty, nor grace; we saw him, and he had no figure of a man.* And againe, afterwards he saith, *That his face was as if it had beene hidden, and despised, and that therefore they esteemed him not. He indeede, did suffer our infirmities, and our sorrowes, and we tooke him for some leproous person, who had beene strooken and abased by our Lord.*

Math.

7.

Mark.

9.

Luke. 9

Psal.

44.

Esay.

51.

Well then my deere brother , in this *face*, which seemes to be soe deformed, ( but which indeede is rarely beautifull to such as behould it with the eyes of faith and loue , considering that it was loue which deformed it, to the end that he might beautify our deformity ) doth God hide them, who labour that they may not depart from him. And he giues them light wherewith to looke him in the face, and to receiue such strength, and comfort thence, as to make them feele, that he said true , who said  
*Shew vs thy face and we shall be safe.*

Psal.

79.

This face is beheld by the eternall father, and out of that sight, doe result to vs, the beames of his bounty and light, for by meanes thereof doe all those blessings come to vs which

Psal.

83.

God sends. And *Dauid* knowing this, besought God saying. *Looke , vpon the face, of thy Christ.*

For by looking vpon that face, he layes downe that wrath to which he had been moued by looking vpon our impudent faces, and he will remoue the deformity of them , by that other beauty. And to the end that this *face* of his, might euer stand before his father, Saint *Paule* saith , that *Iesus Christ* entred into beauen , to *appeare before the face of God for vs.* And now since the eternall Father lookes into this glasse, that he may come to vs, let vs alsoe looke into it, to the end that we may not depart from him.

Hebr.9

2. Cor.

13.

We haue not any other remedy against our weakenes, but the weakenes of *Iesus Christ* our Lord, of which S. *Paule* said that he dyed with

*infirmity, but that we liues by the power of God*  
 Consider how great things he endured that foe  
 our soules might be taught to loue that weakenes  
 of his, and that we might not giue them  
 away to strangers, they hauing been purchas-  
 ed by their proper Lord, at such a painefull  
 and precious rate. And doe but weigh, what  
 weake braines we haue, in departing from  
 that ioy which recreates the angells, to obtaine  
 this base delight, which is possessed by beasts.  
 And how inconsiderate that soule is, which  
 exchaunges honny, for gall, and the Creatour,  
 for a creature.

Wretched creatures that we are, and whe-  
 ther shall wee goe, and what shall wee seeke,  
 out of Christ our lord? Shall we peraduenture  
 be able to finde out any other Lord like this;  
 any other foe deere companion, and foe true  
 freind, both in prosperity & aduersity? Where  
 is any other foe milde in pardoning, foe beau-  
 tifull to behould, foe wise to consult, and foe  
 good to loue? where is there any other, who  
 can finde in his hart, to dye for mee, with such  
 teares and with such loue? and who still re-  
 maines with a disposition to dye yet againe,  
 if I could haue neede of his second death?  
 O how sincere a truth was that, which Saint  
 Peter deliuered when he said, *Whether shall*  
*we goe O Lord, for thou hast the words of eter-*  
*nall life.*

*John*  
*13.*

Wee are well, my deere brother, where  
 Christ our Lord, hath by his mercy placed vs.



Let vs take heede , that wee trye not what kinde of woefull thing it is , to be without him. A very bitter thing it is , and it costs foundly , the setting on. Lett vs looke vpon the afflictions which he suffered for vs , and with them lett vs comfort our selues in ours ; and by them let vs begg his grace , and fauour ; and he will giue it to vs , that we may thereby , ouercome the world , the flesh , and the deuill ; and soe we shall liue in God , since he dyed to kill our death , and to giue vs life.



*A Letter of the Authour , to the same  
Lady whome formerly he had ani-  
mated , to beare her afflictions with  
patience.*

**M**Y soule loues yours because God  
loues it , and because I am to haue  
noe little part in your happines. S.  
Paule saith , *that they to whome he preached , were  
his ioy , his honour , and his crowne ;* in respect  
that receiuing the word of God from his  
mouth , they had chaunged their life to the  
better , and had begun to walke in the way of  
God , and soe gaue much ioy to S. Paule. For,  
besides that he reioyced in their good , he alsoe  
hoped to receiue a reward at the last day , for  
hauiug beene that instrument, by meanes whe-  
reof , God had gayned those soules ; and there-  
fore did he call them *his crowne*. Because, as a  
crowne doth beautify , and honour the head  
of such as put it on ; so they whoe are saued by  
meanes of any man's preaching, will be a mea-  
nes of honouring and ioying that man, as some  
beautifull crowne of rich stones might doe.

Now this being soe , I confesse you owe me  
not many thanks , for my wishing well to your  
soule ; because the good thereof is mine , in re-

gard that God hath done me the fauour to bestow you vpon me, for my spirituall childe, and will impart you to me as one of the pretious stones of that *crowne*, which one day he will vouchsafe mee, if I continue faithfull in that vocatiō, by which he hath called mee. And now because you are a *stone*, which he will sett in a *crowne*, it is the pleasure of our Lord to worke, and polish you, very well. For, it is noe way fitt, to put such stones in a *crowne*, as are either rough or of noe worth; but such as these will be throwne into hell, since they receiued not their being wrought, and enathelled by the spiritt of our lord. But those liuing stones, whereof the celestiall *Ierusalem* is built, are wrought heere, with soe many blowes, that seemes as if our lord would breake them, and that againe he giues them new blowes, without compassion, euen before the paine of the former be gone. But yet, he hath noe intention to breake them, but to polish them, nor to destroy them, but to beautify them; & to make them such, as that by how much the more they seemed to be ill handled heere, soe much the more brightly they may shine, at the latter day, in the high presence of almighty God. Then will that appeare to be mercy, which heere seemed cruelty. And God will see those pretious stones which he hath wrought, euery one in his proper place, & that, so full of blisse, that the meanest of them is to be incōparably more esteemed then kingdomes, and empires, and whatsoeuer

other earthly things, which can be conceiued.

O happy stroakes, which are to end in such a high repose! O happy labour, which shall be paid, by the imbracements of God himselfe! Wound vs heere, O Lord, as much as thou wilt, soe that thou cherish vs there. Heere make vs weepe, that there thou maist wipe away our teares. Discomfort vs heere, in all things; soe that we may enioy thee, whoe art *all things*; and be rigorous to vs heere, soe that there, thou haue mercy for vs, in store. In this world, we are as banished men, and crowded vp into a corner; and we are as it were, vpon an *Easter eue*. Heauen is our *countray*, and our liberty, & our *festiuitie*. And therefore, howsoeuer things happen, we will make a shift to passe it heere, to the end that *when the glory of God shall appeare, we alsoe may appeare in glory*; & that we may celebrate that ioyfull *Easter*, with soe many Cittizens of heauen who first celebrated the *vigill* vpō earth.

Madam, you must giue thankses to our lord; for hee treates you, as he hath treated, and as he meanes to treat his best freinds. And as for that *onely begotten sonne* of his, who is the principall *stone* of all *stones*, doe but see what blowes they gaue him. For they wrought, & bett vpon him, from head to feete; & these very blowes, did alsoe worke vpon that other second *stone* of heauen, which is the most *Blessed virgin*, our *Bl. Lady*. And soe according to the place, which euery one is to haue there, he must be wrought and polished heere. Now if this be necessary,

euen for iust persons , what shall become of vs sinners , but onely that we must bowe downe the head , and say , O Lord thou punishest mee little in comparison of the much punishment which I deserue. *All that which I can suffer is little, though I alone should suffer all the afflictions of the whole world. For to him who deserues hell , what temporall paine, can seeme great?*

Let vs know , that God is full of pittie towards vs , euen then , when he seemes most rigorous ; without doubt he is full of pittie , since whomesoeuer he punishes heere , he will not punish , but comfort there. For it is written, *That God doth not punish a man for the same thing, twice.* All that which we endure , we deserue , but yet God is soe very full of pittie that for the stripes which he sends vs , he pardons our sinnes , and he accounts it soe , as a peece of seruice from vs , as that he giues vs a crowne for the *sufferance.* And since the afflictions of this world preuent *Purgatorie* , and entitle vs to heauen , who will not loue them , when they come , yea and beg more of God , then yet he had , and euen be sorry , when he hath them not. He who knowes Christ and his kingdome , hath noe compassion of himselfe , in this world , because he knowes himselfe to be more fitt for God , the more afflictions he endures for his sake. And soe did that enamoured *Ignatius* say *Fire, Crosse, fury of beasts, cutting, quartering, breaking, and destroying of euery parte of my whole body, and the scourges of the deuill himselfe ; Let all these*

Ne-  
hum. i.

things come vpon mee, and lett me onely enioy Christ our lord. There is nothing in this world ; which can doe me good ; not soe much as euen a kingdome. It is more happines for me to dye for Christ our Lord, then to exercise dominion ouer the earth , from one end thereof to the other. This saith that Saint , as one who knew well and did much loue our lord Iesus Christ ; and who saw that all was well employed , which could be disbursed for the gayning of him.

In this manner, I desire that you would encourage your selfe to suffer the *Purgatorie* of your sinnes ; yea and though you should not haue committed sinne, you should yet apply your selfe to endure affliction, for the pure loue of Iesus ; whoe endured soe great things for you, without hauing giuen the least shaddow of cause in himselfe. And I would haue you say to him, that howsoeuer you are bound to suffer what he will send, yet out of a free hart, you would gladly suffer, for the pure loue of him, though you were not bound to it. And thus according to the intention of your hart , our Lord will accept it at your hands, as an *Embleme* which you carry for his loue. In the loues of this world men vse to make other *Emblemes* ; but in the loue of God , the *Embleme* , is *sufferance in affliction*. And he who is not of a strong hart to suffer much , lett him neuer stand telling mee that he loues much. For in this world there is noe loue without greife. I hope in God , that as heere hee giues you greife, and



trouble ; soe hee hath provided a place of rest, and ioy for you, in the other world. Though indeede , the very *suffering* for such a Lord, is reward enough. And soe that as there is nothing soe much to be desired , in the other world , as to enioy that kingdome with Christ our Lord , soe neither is there any thing in this , which may be compared to the excellency of *suffering* with him, and for him. *Suffer* therefore with a good will, since you are to be crowned , for the same. For the afflictions which you endure , come to you but as a fitt meanes , whereby you may obtaine that crowne.



*A Letter of the Authour to a Cauallero his freind.*

He shewes how that person who feeles himselfe growne could in the way of vertue, hath reason to apprehend it much, and to greiue much, for the present ill, and for the daunger wherein he is of falling into greater mischance; and namely of a hardned hart which is the next doore to hell.

That vsually this decay of spirit, growes either from ingratitude, or negligence. And lastly he speakes of the remedies.

**H**E who in some former tyme, hath seene his soule, a proficient in vertue; and at the present findes it to be in decay, hath much cause to be in paine, and to procure remedy, by all the meanes hee may. For, if a man be apt to feele the diminution which he may suffer, in his temporall goods; how much more ought wee to apprehend the decay of the goods of our soule, which are goodes indeede? Iob said with a deepe sigh, that he wished to be as he had bene, in the tyme of his youth, when our Lord protected him, and when he made his candle shine ouer his head. These and other things, which he affirmed himselfe to haue possessed before, and were wanting to him then, at the present, must rather be thought to haue bene certaine choi-  
ce, delightfull, and deuout communications, which formerly he had receiued from God, and then were missing; then that he was then in

Iob. 19

present want of his former vertues. For since he gaue soe good account of himselfe, in that tyme of tryall, which is true tyme wherein indeede it may be seene, what strength one hath, he is found to haue had noe cause to cōplaine, *as if our Lord did not then protect him, or carry his light ouer him; and therefore he saith vpon the former ground, who will graunt that I may be as I was before. &c.*

Now if he complaine of this, what will that man haue reason to doe, who findes himselfe wasting in pointe of vertue it selfe; and who perceiues that his soule goes esttraunging it selfe by little and little not onely from those communications which he had enioyed, and wherewith he comforted himselfe, in former tyme; but euen from the very custody of Gods lawe, and from conformity with his holy will. And although this mischeife be great, euen for the present, yet is it greater by much, for the future losse, which may be feared. For a little fall, in relation to a great one, lyes as close as the eeue doth to the holy day; *and as neere he is to be vomitted out, who leades a life of tepidity.*

God, for his pretious passion, keepe euery mortall man, from this misery which is so great as to make Saint Peter say, *that such men as they, had beene better, neuer to haue knowne our Lord, then after they had knowne him, and walked in his way, to haue forsaken him and to haue betaken themselves to wicked courses.* And that was not without great mistery, which our lord said to the man who

*Apoc.*  
3.

*2. Pet.*  
2.

had bene sick, eight and thirty yeares : Now thou art whole ; but take heede thou sinne noe more, least a worse thing happen to thee. These words are to be weighed, & feared withall, for they containe a rigorous threat, and are deliuered by the mouth of *Truth* it selfe, and are wont many tymes, to be executed, vpon such as feare him not, nor take a course to preuent their falling into them.

*There happens a worse thing to them*, because the sinnes into which they fall afterward are more highly qualifed, and more deeply rooted, then the sinnes committed in former tymes. As there is a difference betweene a man when he falls with his eyes open, and when with his eyes shutt ; or betweene a man whoe hath witt, and yet doth the workes of a foole, and another, who either hath no witt at all or very little ; or betweene a man who ought his life to another in the way of gratitude, and seruice, for great fauours receiued, and another who had receiued noe such fauours. One thing it is to meete the king in the streete, & (seeing and knowing, who he is), not onely to doe him noe reuerence, but to proceede irreuerently towards him ; and another thing it is, not to know him at all, or not very well ; or at least, not to consider who it was, that passed.

A great fauour it is which God doth to them, to whome he giues both the knowledge of their sinnes ; and of his diuine loue, but yet withall he obliges them to much thereby *since*

Luke.  
12.

*according to the gift he saith that the account must be made.* And if it be ill done, not to pay good with good; what will it be, to render euill for good receiued, and to answear with offences insteede of seruices?

*There happens a wors thing to them,* since they are wont to sinne more, and with more faulty circumstances then before; and they come by little and little, towards a hardnes of hart; and to dry themselues vp, in such sort, that they are not in disposition, to doe the good which they did before; I meane not, when they were soe prosperous, and happy in our Lord, but euen before that, when yet, he had not called them to his seruice. Then doe they sigh, though it be with a hard & vntoward hart, to obtaine a little spirituall good againe, and they finde it not. But that which they finde is, That heauen is to them made of brasse, and the earth of iron; for there is not a drop of water to be found, which may soften their soules, or yeild them any fruite, whereby they may be susteyned. And they, whoe in former tymes, were visited & watered, with many good inspirations, to which they vouchsafed not to answear, doe now desire some one, and cannot compasse it.

Luc. 16

Thus are negligent & fastidious rich men punished, by being killed with hungar; as the rich couetous man *was afflicted with thirst.* And it is not many myles, from this hardnes of hart to hell it selfe, since the Scripture saith: *It shall goe ill with the hard harted at the latter day.* And the

being cured of this euill, colts deere, and it is a thing which is of great priuiledge and grace when it is graunted by our lord, as S. Bernard saith. *Noe man of a hard hart did euer obtaine saluation, vnlesse God, did in his mercy cure him first, and did take his stony hart from him, and giue him a hart of flesh, insteede thereof.*

These are the iourneys ends of those wicked sonnes, who after that they were receiued for sonnes, and treated after that rate, *doe forgett their Lord whoe possessed them, who made them, and who created them.* And he who trembles not at this, doth already giue testimony enough, that he is hard harted; and hath reason to feare so much the more, as he feares the lesse. And therefore Sir, let vs consider these things, as signes of that, which is like to follow. When we see that the foundations of a wall fall away, it is tyme to apply some remedy, since wee are aduertised of the daunger. Lett vs greatly feare the goeing backward in spiritt, of one onely day, & lett vs not suffer a defect, though it may seeme small, to passe away, without punishment. And I say *though it seeme small*, for in very deede, none at all is soe, for the very least of them doth vs much hurt, though some of them be greater then other.

Lett vs resolute that this mischeife proceedes from one of these two causes; either not being *thankesfull* for the good receiued, or being *negligent*, in conseruing it. Saint Bernard saith, That the cause why God imparting great benefitts

Dent.  
32.



to many, without euen soe much as their asking, doth yet deny them other inferiour benefitts which they asked afterwards, is because they were *ungratefull* for those greater benefitts; and thereby make themselues vnworthy of the lesser. Nor is it any new thing, that he who vses ill the great blessing which he receiues (as if there were noe neede of taking paines, to conserue that which is already gotten) should loose them. Soe that we must now thanke God againe, for the benefitts which we haue receiued; and let vs employ them well, (forasmuch as now remaines in our power), least wee vtterly loose them all, and our selues with them. Lett vs be the more remisse in other businesses, that soe we may be attentiuē to this, with all our power. When a man diuides his estate, into very many parts and payments, it growes to be in effect nothing. And he who hath receiued particular blessings from heauen may content himselfe with keeping them, and growing rich in them, though he be not so prosperous in the goods of this world. If he haue a minde to comply very punctually with the desire of temporall riches, I feare that it will be vpon the price of somewhat els which is more worth. For *the world is soe full of malignitie*, and our forces are so weake, that wee are like some little poore candle, in the midst of many windes, and if we faile to be very diligent, to keepe it in, they will blow it out. Such is the misery of vs whoe liue in this

exile.

1. Iohn.

5.

exile. And therefore they, who haue any brai-  
nes, are wont to feare, and sigh, and groane,  
with desire to be gone from hence.

Make you account that this is your cheife  
estate, your honour your safety, and your life;  
and place your right eye vpon this and your  
left vpon other things. And if somewhat must  
needes be lost, let it be that, which will one  
day be lost, whether wee will or noe, how ca-  
refully soeuer we may thinke to keepe it. And  
lett that remaine in safety, which, if our selues  
doe not loose, wee shall be saued for euer:  
*Iacob* disposed of that wife and those children  
whom he least loued, into the frōt or foreward  
of his company, desyring, *that if any ill accident*  
*should arrīue it might rather fall first vpon them,*  
*then vpon that wife and children which he loued*  
*better.* And euery day wee doe the same, in  
marshalling the parts of our temporall estate.  
For we dispose our selues to loose that which is  
lesse, and to saue that which is more.

*Gen. 31*

Lett vs therefore resolue that it is better to  
haue a good conscience, then much temporall  
riches; and to haue credit with God, then with  
man, and so in the rest. And procuring to ap-  
pease our Lord, by penance, and confession,  
for that which is past, lett vs beginne to make  
new purposes; and lead a new life, with fresh  
courage, being very much offended with our  
selues, for hauing beene soe vngratefull, to our  
great benefactour, and soe negligent in that,  
which concerned vs most. Giue not ouer the

exercifes of penance, of prayer, of reading spirituall bookes, of frequentation of the Sacraments, though you performe them but dryly. But aboue all lett there be noe want of humble prayer, and of a wounded hart. For our mercifull Lord who ftands expecting, that we should goe towards him, to doe vs good, will come out vpon the way, to meete vs; and will couer vs clofe with the mantle of his pittie, & goodnes. And will giue vs new ftrength, that now we may againe, beginne to ferue him, and procure new meritts for his kingdome. I befeech his diuine Maiefty, that he may foe proceede with you, for the eternall glory of his goodnes.

The bookes about which you aske, and which I take to be conuenient for you, are the *Confefions*, and *Meditations* of *S. Auguftine*; the *Moralls* of *S. Gregory*; the *Summe* of the mifteries of our faith by *Titileman*, and *Dionifius Carthusianus*. God almighty keepe you euer.



*A Letter of the Authour to a Cauallier his freind,  
whom he perswades to doe his dewty, which is  
to fight the battailes of our Lord against the ene-  
my of God, which is the selfe-will of man.*

**H**auē vnderstood the reasons,  
whereby you would perswade  
me, that it is more securely fitt  
for you, to dwell in the Citty,  
then in that towne. And though  
indeede they be subtile, yet they doe not mo-  
ue me much. For the most certaine of all is  
that, which wee doe, after the example of  
Christ our Lord; and which wee obtaine at  
his hands by prayer; and which wee see clee-  
rely by experience, and not that, which on  
the other side, wee take to bee conuenient  
for vs, through a meere humaine and per-  
happs a perpetuall kinde of iudgment. Who  
can doubt, but that you, as being an Inha-  
bitant of that Citty, and withall a great  
fauourer of my meanenesse, and desiring  
much, that I should continue to liue there,  
are both *Iudge* and *witnes*, in your owne cau-  
se. And therefore the tyme which you spend  
in seeking reasons, were better employed, vpon  
making deuout prayers. And it will happen to  
you as Saint Bernard saith it doth betweene  
the preacher and his hearers, *If thou wilt*

*perswade, saith he, thou must doe it more by sighing then by exclaiming.* And though in that which I haue said, mee thinks you haue committed some excesse; yet in another thing, you haue the better of it, and you edify mee; Namely, in your hauing written three letters to mee, without hauing receiued any one answere of myne. I esteeme this fauour, as much more then speaking by word of mouth, as there is difference, betweene *doing*, and *saying*. And it is a thing, which I desire much, at his hands who writes to me. For I finde soe many who are impatient with mee, vpon this occasion; that I had rather they wrote not at all, then that they should be offended with mee soe soone. And soe much of this.

What shall I now say to you, or what shall I beg of you, since you are soe much my good Lord; but that (forasmuch as you are a Cauallier of honour,) you resolute to fight; and that you be not called by a wronge name, a thing from which a christian ought most to fly, for such a one must loue sincerity, and be that very thing, which he appears to be. I know well, that the vigilancy of our mortall enemy the deuill, is soe great, that, for the drawing vs to be of his party, and for feare least we should gaine that, which he hath lost, hee will often make you feeble, *That the life of man heere on earth, is a continuall warfare;* and now and then will make you groane vnder the affliction of his extreme importunity, and cry out to our Lord,

Esay.  
38.

from whome succour comes. *Domine mihi propiti-  
us responde pro me.* O Lord I suffer violence, doe thou  
answer for mee. And now since you haue one  
already, who makes you remember that you  
liue in warre, I will put you in minde in what  
sort you are to wage it, that soe you may over-  
come. For wee cannot expect, as a fruite of  
this warre, but either great felicity, or great  
misery; since the triumph of this victory is to  
be, God possessed for all eternity; and the losse  
by being vanquished, is the losse, and that for  
euer, of almighty God.

O that a man were able to thunder out soe  
strong a voice, as that it might reach to the  
eares of all mankind; and might astonish  
them with the feare of hell, & encourage them  
with the hope of heauen! O you Sonnes of  
*Adam*, how long will you be soe blinde as not  
to see this? how long will you be soe deafe, as  
not to heare this? how long will you be soe in-  
sensible, as that this truth will not be able to  
penetrate to the very lowest, and most inward  
part of your harts? Tell mee; why haue you  
rendred your selues soe basely, vnder the feete  
of your enemies; and why doe you runne after  
them, with your hands tyed vp, without either  
feare or shame? Doe you not know that hee who  
suffers himselfe to be overcome by sinne, is taken pri-  
soner by the deuill? Doe you not knowe that the wages  
which sinne giueth is death, both of body & soule  
in hell, and that for all eternity? why doe you  
wish your selfe soe ill, as to goe hunting after

Iohn, 8.



Your owne mischeife ; giuing stabs as it were to your owne soules, by being soe mightily enraged for euery little offence which may be offered you? And why haue you not a feeling of the losse of God, & of his freindshipp ; since you haue soe quicke a sence , when there is question of a little riches , or honour , which whether it be kept or lost , it makes you, in very deede, neither more nor lesse? what will you answeare in the day of visitation, and anguish , which is coming towards you , when these shadowes being past , and this smoake being vanished , you shall be summoned to leaue that flesh , which you loued soe much, and to forgoe this present world , which you soe esteemed , and you shall be presented before that rigorous Iudge, whome you will finde soe much the more seuerer against you ; as he hath founde you lesse obedient to him?

What would you haue him doe? would you haue him know you for his Caualliers, you who haue gone fighting in his enemyes campe, on their side? And whilest hee mainteyned you with his blessings , and euen with that very life , whereby you liue, you would needes obey the lawes of his mortall enemy, when, the while, you detested his? what would you haue God doe? would you haue him pay you for the seruice which you haue not done? Into what reasonable minde can it sincke, that I should serue one man & demaund my pay of another? with what colour can I, who haue offended a man

aske him a reward (when I haue done) as of a faithfull seruant? Let vs not be deceiued, O men, in this; *Noe man shall reape, but according to that which he hath sown. He who soweth in flesh, shall reape corruption; and he who will reape life, must sow in spirit, for grapes grow not out of thornes, nor figgs out of thistles.* Gal. 16. 2. Cor. 2.

I had forgott my selfe for I was speaking to dead men, as if they were aliue. What doth it profit to sound a trumpett to him whoe is in the profundity of deafenes? what doth it profit mee, to say *Heare this*, to men with whome it enters not, euen by the very first gates, of their hart. What shall we doe, O Lord? for now I see that the threat which was made by the Prophet Esay is fulfilled. *Hearing you shall beare, and not vnderstand, and seeing you shall see, and yet not see.* Esay. 6. For neither words nor scourges, nor sweete vsage cann suffice to waken those miserable creatures out of their deadly sleepe; till their end arriue, when they must heare the sentēce which sends them to Hell, and then must feelee eternall torments, without any remedy thereof. A great misery is this, & hee is happy, whome our Lord hath deliuered from it; giuing him notice of his wicked wayes, and a will to walke afterward, in such as are good. Remember you therefore that day, wherein God called you, and know that then God opened your eares, and eyes, to the end that you might both see, and heare; as verely and as truly, as if he had cured some person, who had beene blinde, and dumbe. And

remembering it, giue great thanks for the same; since a giift was then giuen you, if you disposed your selfe well to receiue it, which is more worth, then all things els; since freindshipp with our Lord, was giuen you, to which noe other thing may be compared. And lett the signe of your true gratitude, be a faithfull care of perseuering to keepe your eyes, and eares open towards Almighty God. For hee would be much more blame-worthy, who should fall when his eyes were open, and might see that hee were falling; then another whoe had noe eyes in his head. It is one thing for a soule to doe absurd things; another thing, for a man, who is of iudgment. And soe the fall of one, whome our lord hath rayfed, and placed vpon his feete, and giuen him light, wherewith to see; is more displeasing to his diuine Maicesty; then they which he tooke, before they knew or loued God. I beseech you therefore admonish those new Caualliers of the king of heauen, that they vndertake not this busines in iest, since both the punishment of negligence, and the reward of due care which is taken in it, is noe matter which indeede endureth iest. God is a great Lord, and he will be serued with much diligence; and hee inflicted noe lesse punishment *vpon the sloathfull seruant, then to cast him bound, hand, and foote, into exterior darkenes;* which signifies a being excluded, from all the blessings of God, and of his howse.

And since to the end that wee may be fauorits

with an earthly king, and to acquire the possession of a little earth, there is a necessity of taking care, of watching, of troubles, yea and sometymes, euen of shedding bloud; lett not them grow faint, in the combatt; since God whose cause it is, will be their captaine in the strength of whose arme, they shall infallibly goe victorious out of the feild.

The enemy whome they are to ouercome, and the Cittie which they are to subdue, is their owne proper will. Let them place that will, before themselves; and against that, lett them leuell all their shott; and to that let them say. *Thou art the enemy of God, since thou desirest that which is contrary to him, and therefore thou art my enemy. For I wholly belong to God. I am the freind of his freinds; and the enemy of his enemyes. I will haue noe peace with thee, that see I may haue noe warre with God. Lett God raigne in my hart, and not myne owne disordered will. I will gouerne my selfe according to that, which hee commaunds, and not according to that I list. I will beg of my God, that hee will be pleased to shew mee his holy will, and that shall be my lawe, though myne owne will would faine haue it otherwise. Let it paine mee or let it please mee, I am resolved to tie my selfe fast to God, since besides that I owe to him otherwise; he was fastned to the Crosse for mee. Nay I am undone if I goe not to him, since all that which comes not to him heere, with loue; shall be deuied from him, in the next life, by his hate. Let it cost me my bloud, soe that I may not loose my God, but that I may haue*

Ps. 26.

this word from his blessed mouth. Reioyce thou good and faithfull seruant, enter thou into the ioye of thy Lord. In fine, all that which passes is very short; and all this is temporall; and the rest eternall; all this is light, and that, is full of waight. And therefore let vs say from the hart, with Dauid. One thing haue I desired of our Lord, and that will I seeke, that I may dwell in the howse of our Lord for euer. And lett this be our conclusion, that heauen did neuer cost deare. Our Lord graunt it to you, and to vs all, euen by his owne deare blood. Amen.



*A Letter to a great Lord wherein he  
treates of the knowledge of God,  
and of a man's selfe; and how he  
was to proceede towards his vnf-  
falls.*

THE peace of our Lord Iesus Christ be euer  
remayning with your lordship. The holy  
S. *Augustine* desired two things of our Lord,  
saying, Graunt to mee, O Lord, that I may know thee,  
& that I may know my selfe. These two are things,  
which we must all desire, and noe man is to be  
found without them, vnlesse withall he desire  
to be found without saluation. The temple of  
*Salomon* consisted of two partes; Both of them  
were holy, but yet one of them, was more holy  
then the other. That parte which was lesse ho-  
ly, was the way, to the other, which was more  
holy. The first is the knowledge of a man's selfe;  
which certainly is a holy thing; & it is the way  
to that *Sancta Sanctorum*, which is the knowledge  
of God; where our Lord makes answere to our  
demaunds, and remedies our necessities; and  
where we finde the fountaine of life. For this,  
saith our Lord, is true life, that wee know thee, and  
whome thou hast sent, Iesus Christ,

But now, this soe high thing, namely the  
knowledge of God, is not to be obtained, without



that other, which seemes soe lowe, namely the *knowledge of ones selfe*. It is most certaine, that noe man euer saw God, vnlesse first he saw himselfe. Nor is it safety for any man, to fly high, vnlesse he haue the counterpoysse of knowing himselfe, which makes vs thinke basely of our selues.

Amongst all the other fauours of our Blessed Sauour, there is noe doubt, but that his disciples would be standing to looke at him, with exceeding great gust, whilst he was ascending vp to heauen vpon *Ascension day*, since there was noe remedy, but that they must needs forgoe his conuersation; that conuersation which can carry noe disgust with it. And they found great comfort, in looking vpon the way by which he passed, and towards the place to which he went. But what did our lord commaund them? Not certainly, that they should be still casting vp their eyes to heauen, though that seemed to be an excellent thing; But he said thus to them; *You men of Galilee, why doe you stand looking vp to heauen?* Giuing vs thereby to vnderstand, that although it be a very fauoury thing, to looke towards God, yet it concerns vs alsoe to study our selues. First for the reuerence which wee owe to God vpon whom we cannot looke, but with great confusion, considering how vnworthy we are thereof. And secondly, because when a man forgetts himselfe, he is instantly apt to become wanton; & not seeing his owne faultes, and frailty,

he growes to loose all holy feare and he prooves light, and giddy, like a ship which being without ballist, looses the ankar, when any tempest rises, and the end thereof is to be carried hither & thither, till at last it be brought to suffer wrack. I neuer saw any soule remaine in safety, but by *the knowledge of it selfe*. Noe building can be sure without deepe foundation; and that tyme is well imployed, which is spent vpon the reproofe of a man's owne soule. It is full of profit, towards the amendment of our faults, if we will examine them. What kinde of thing is a man who examines not, and knowes not himselfe but a howse without a window; but the sonne of some widdow ill brought vp, who for want of correction, is growne wicked; but a measure, without all measure, and rule, and which therefore is a false measure. And finally, what is he but a man, whoe is indeede noe man? For he who considers not himselfe, doth neither gouerne himselfe like a man, nor doth he vnderstand, or possesse himselfe; but whylest he is able to tell many storyes of other things, he can giue noe account of himselfe, at all. These are they; who hauing forgotten themselues, take such paines to vnderstand the liues of others; and hauing shut vp their eyes to their owne defects, haue yet more then a hundred eyes open, which stand in continuall watch over the etrouer of other folkes. These are they, who obserue, and aggravate the errours of

their neighbours, and neglect their owne. For in regard those errors of others are beheld by them, more continually, & more close at hand; they seeme greater to them, then their owne, vpon which they neuer looke but from farre off; & soe, how great soeuer they be in themselves, they seeme little to them. From hence it proceeds, that in their conuersation, they are soe intractable, and soe rigourous; for iust after the rate of their hauing noe consideration of their one infirmities, they haue noe compassion of others.

I neuer yet saw man, who was curious in the consideration of himselfe, who would not alsoe, easily passe over the fault of another; and whatsoeuer that man be, who is seuer against another when he falls, giues strong euidence, whereby it is proued that he considers not his owne defects. Soe that, if wee desire to fly, from this soe dangerous kinde of blindness, we must be sure to view & reuiue; what kinde of things our selues are, that soe when we finde how miserable we be, we may cry out for remedy, to our lord *Iesus*. Because indeede, hee is *Iesus*, that is to say a Sauiour; but yet of noe other, then such as know, and bewaile their owne miseries, and who receiue (indeede, if they can; and, in desire, if they cannot) the holy Sacraments of the Church, that soe they may be cured and saued. And although for the making vs know our selues, God, and his Saints, haue declared, many and many things to vs, yet he whose shall

attentiuely behould that which he may obserue to passe within his owne hart, will finde soe many things for which he must despise him selfe, that, with horroure, he will cry out, from the bottome of that Abisse, and say, *there is noe end of my miseries.*

Who is he that hath not erred, in those things wherein he thought him selfe most sure? who hath not desired, & searched after things, as concerning that they were good for him; which yet afterward, he found to be full of preiudice? Who will presume to know any thing, since he hath beene deceiued innumerable tymes? what thing is more blinde, then a man, who knowes not soe much, as what he is to aske of God, as *S. Paule* tells vs? and this comes to passe, because we know not soe much as what is good, for our selues, as it happened euen to the same *S. Paule*. Who begging of God, that he would free him from a particular temptation, conceived that he had asked a right; but it was given him to be vnderstood, that indeede he knew not what he asked, nor soe much as what was good for him. And now who will put confidence in his ability, to know euen soe much as what he should Iudge, & desire, concerning himselfe, since he, whome the *holy ghost* inhabited, did aske that, which was not good for him, to obtaine. Certainly, our ignorance must needes be very great, since we erre soe oftē in those things, wherein it imports vs soe much not to erre.

But now though sometymes, our lord should

Rom. 2.

Rom. 2.  
Cor. 12.

teach vs to know what is good, yet who doth not see, how very great our weakenes is; and how we fall flat vpon our faces, in those things, wherein it concerned vs to stand vp right. To whome hath it not occurred many tymes, to propound the doeing of some good thing, and yet to finde himselfe ouerthrowne, and overcome, by that wherein he tooke himselfe to be most inuincible. To day wee lament our sinnes with teares in our eyes, and we purpose to refraine them afterward, and yet, euen whilst the same teares are still wett vpon our cheekes, some new occasion of sinne is offered, and weeping because we fell, we committ that very thing, for which we may haue cause to weepe againe; receiuing the body of our lord *Iesus Christ*, with much cause of being confounded, for the irreuerence which we haue committed, For the tyme hauing beene but short, since we harboured his pretious body in our bosomes, it happens sometymes, that by some sinne, we driue his grace out of our soules. What care is soe weake, and light, which chaunges soe often, vpon the warning of all windes, as wee? Sometymes merry and sometymes sadd; now deuout, and then distracted; now full of desire tending to heauen, and then following the world, and euendropping downe to hell. Now hee abhorres a thing, and instantly he loues that, which he abhorred. He casts vp that which he had eaten, because he found it charge his stomack, and presently he eates it vp againe,



as if he had not cast it before. What thing can there be, with such variety of coulours in it, as a man who is made after this sort? what Image can they painte with soe many faces, and soe many tongues, as this kinde of man? How truely said *Iob*, *Man neuer remaines in one and the same state.* And the reason heereof is because he is *ashes or dust*, and his life, a *winde*. Now what a sort should hee bee, who would seeke for any repose or rest, betweene dust, and winde? I doe not thinke that there could be a more hedious thing, then if we were able to discerne to how many seuerall dispositions one man is subiect, in one onely day. His whole life is a very masse of mutability, and frailty. And that, which the scripture saith, agrees well to him, *The foole is as chaungeable as the Moone.*

*Iob. 14.**Iob. 7.**Ecc. 27*

But now what remedy shall wee finde heereof? Certainly we can haue none better then to know our selues for *Lunaticks*. And, as in former tymes they carryed a *Lunatick person* to our Lord *Iesus Christ*, that he might cure him; soe lett vs goe for cure, to the same lord *Iesus*. The scripture saith, that *the euill spirit* tormented that man, and that sometymes he cast him into the fire, and sometymes into the water; and the very same happens to vs. Sometymes wee fall into the fire of couetousnes, of wrath, & of enuy; at other tymes into the water of carnality, of tepidity, and of malice. And if wee consider, vpon how large accompts wee stand obliged to almighty God, for the tyme past; and how



little amendment there is in the tyme present, we will be sure to say, and we may doe it with much truth. *The sorrowes of death haue enuironed mee, the dangers of hell haue hemmed me in.*

O danger of hell, which is soe mightily to be feared! And who is not hee, that will not watch with a hundred thousand eyes, that he may not be put to welter in that profound Lake; where hee shall eternally bewaile the temporall delight, which he hath vnlawfully enioyed? who will not take care of his way, least otherwise he be found wādering from all happines? where are the eyes of that man, who sees not this? where are his eares, whoe heares not this? where is his pallate who tastes not this? It is a cleare testimony of death, not to performe the actions of life. Our sinnes are innumerable, our frailties are great, our enemies are stout, crafty, and many; and they hate vs home. That whereof wee are in question, is either the gayning or loosing of God, for all eternity. How comes it then to passe, that in the middest of soe many dangers, we can esteeme our selues secure; and vnder the weight of soe many woundes, we doe not feele the paine thereof? why seeke we not for some remedy, before the night steale vpon vs, and before the gates of all succour, be shutt vp against vs? when those foolish virgins shall cry out, and it shall be answered thus, *I know you not.*

*Maith*

25.

1. Cor.

11.

Let vs therefore *know our selues*, and we shall be knowne by almighty God. Lett vs

iudge and condemne our selues, and soe we shall be absolved by almighty God. Lett vs place our eyes vpon our owne faultes, and soe there will be mercy enough for vs, & to spare. Lett vs consider our owne miseries, and we shall learne to haue pittie vpon those of others. For as the scripture saith, *By that which is in thy selfe, thou shalt come to know that which is in thy neighbour.* If I see my selfe fall sometymes by fraikty, I shall thinke that it may happen soe to my neighbour, and as I shall be gladd to haue my fault pittied, soe will I haue pittie vpon other men. When my betters doe me a disfa- uour which I feele much, I must thinke that my inferiours will be troubled after the same manner, if I disfa- uour them. If I be sadd, I desire comfort; and my neighbours case is the same. I am troubled at an ill word which was spoken to mee, and I say. *That I am made of flesh and not of iron;* & this serues me for a prooffe, that my neighbour is alsoe made of flesh, & feeles the like affliction, vpon the like occasion. The ill cōditions of some men, giue me trouble; and I wish that they would mend them, that soe they may not occasion mee to sinne, and my neighbours desire the same of mee. Wee are all made of the same mettall, & there is noe better rule by which I may liue with my neighbour, then to marke attentiuely, that which passeth within my selfe, since hee, and I, are one.

He who practises this point of mercy with his neighbour; may safely passe on to the

Eccle.  
31.

*Mat. 5.* knowledge of Christ our Lord to be releiued by him. For the mercifull, shall obtaine mercie. But otherwile, he will heare that, which the scripture saith, *He whoe shuts his eare against the voyce of the poore, that man shall cry out, and not bee heard.*

*Pro. 21.*

*Mat. 7.* All man kinde is poore; nor is there any one of that race, whoe is not subiect to some necessitie. Lett vs consider well, if we be deafe to the miseries of others, for soe will God be to ours. Let noe man thinke, that Christ our Lord, will measure to vs with any other measure, then as we measure to others. Lett noe man thinke, that he shall obtaine pardon, if he afford not pardon. The vntoward man, shall meete with vntowardnes; the troublesome man, with troubles; the offensiuue man, with iniuries, and the charitable man, with mercy. For, to sowe thornes, with a man's neighbour; & to thinke of gathering figges, at the hands of God, is wholly impossible.

Now because we consider not this, there are very few whoe finde themselues enterteyned; by almighty God with sweetenes; and there are many who complaine, that God forgetts to releiue their miseries; and they maruaile how hee can send them such store of troubles, both within, and without; especially since his very name, is, *Mercifull, and the shewer of mercies*; and since he inuites men to seeke for succour at his hands. They beg, they seeke, and they finde noe remedy; and from thence

comes their complaint. But if they were not deafe to that law, which God published in his ghospell, saying, *with the selfe same measure, wherewith you measure to others, it shall be measured to you againe*, they would plainly see, that themselues are they, whoe are wanting to their neighbours, and consequently are wanting to God in their persons; and therefore it is, that God may seeme to bee wanting to them. Let them complaine in themselues, in that they haue noe charity with their neighbours. For God, is full of Charitie, for his parte; but it is not reason, nor will hee exercise it, towards such, as are wanting in it to their neighbours. And if at any tyme he impart temporall blessings, to such a one as is vncharitable towards others, what good will those blessings doe that wicked man, if withall he loose himselfe. But God will not giue him any such thing, as may make him indeede the better by it, but vpon condition that he carry himselfe as he ought towards his neighbours.

Let vs therefore know our selues, and lett vs be towards others, as we desire, they should be towards vs; and soe let vs passe on towards the knowledge of God, and from the *Sancta* to the *Sancta Sanctorum*. And lett vs lift vp our eyes to our Lord, whoe was placed vpon the Crosse, for our saluation, and in him wee shall discerne, both more, & greater blessings, then wee discouered miseries in our selues. And if by thinking what we are, we grow

sadd, through the consideration of our greivous sinnes past, and through the daungers which are at hand; we shall be refreshed by looking vp to him, when, wee consider, both how truly, and how superabundantly he payd that, which we owe, & purchased that strength for vs, whereby we might subdue our enemyes.

It is he who secures vs, but, vpon cōdition, that wee relye on him. And what O Lord, shall hee feare, who followes thee? At what shall he tremble, who loues thee? Who shall be able to sett vpon that man, whoe takes thee for his defence? How shall the deuill be able to carry him away, who is incorporated in thee? Or how shall the eternall *father* forbear to loue that creature, whome hee perceiues to be in his sōne, as the *branch* is in the *vine*? Or how shall the *sonne* faile to loue that man, whome he perceiues to loue him? Or how shall the *Holy ghost* forsake that creature, whoe is the tēple, which himself inhabits? we possesse greater benefits in Christ our lord, then wee are full of miseries in our selues; and we haue more cause of hope when wee behould him, then of distrust when we cast our eyes vpon our selues. Nor is there any cōfort, or resting place for such a one as is discōforted in himselfe, but to looke vp to this *Iesus*, vpo the *Crosse*, whome God ordayned for the remedy of all such as should be wounded, with the biting of spiritual serpēts. For as anciently God commaunded that they should erect a Serpent of brasse; that all such a should behould it, might be cured of the wound of

those corporall serpēts, so he who shall behould Christ our lord, with *faith & love*, shall liue, and he, on the other side, who behoulds him not, shall not faile to dye. He who findes himself all afflicted, & wounded, shalbe refreshed, if he looke vp hither, as Dauid did, whē he said. *My soule, was troubled within mee, & therefore will I remēber thee, & the land of Iordan, & Hermō, & the little hill.*

Ps. 41.

Hee who behoulds himselfe, and there discouers soe many abominations, is troubled at himselfe, and he hath reason. And not finding one houre exactly well spent in his whole life, but seeing his sinnes to be many & great, & his good deedes to be so few, & weake what should he doe but be troubled, when he findes himselfe soe vnable to make a good accounte, before soe strict a Iudge? Only he must remēber Christ our lord, cōsidering what he wrought in the land of *Iordan*, & vpon that *little hill*: and bewayling his sinnes, and receiuing the holy *Sacraments*, hee must liue in obedience to the commaundemēts of God, and of his *Church*; and soe as a sonne, he may hope for the inheritance of heauen.

He must alsoe call to minde, that which was wrought by our lord in those hills of *Hermon*, which are many & in the little hill alsoe. Which whether it be that of *Horeb*, where God gaue the lawe, or whether it be some other hill, doth not soe much import vs, who are Christians; whose vnderstanding *Iesus Christ* hath opened towards the conceiuing of the scriptures, and he vnderstands them, who vnderstands



Cor. 10

Christ our Lord in them, who is shutt vp therein, as a graine of corne may be, in an eare, or as wine, is in the grape. And therefore the end of our law is Christ our Lord; for all the lawe rests in him. The *hills of Hermon*, both they which are within the land of promise, and without it, as also the *little hill*, doe all signify but one hill, which may iustly be said to be a *little one*, and to be of *Hermon*. And this is *Mount Caluary*, where our redemption was wrought, by the shedding of the blood, of the sonne of God.

Gal. 3.

Now to the end that wee may knowe, how well this name may be applyed to *Mount Caluary*, it is to be vnderstood that *Hermon* signifies *malediction*. And how can *Mount Caluary* be better expressed, then by the name of *malediction*; since it was the place to which they carryed malefactours to be executed; whome the scripture calls *accursed*, because they were to be soe punished. And because Christ our Lord saw, that we were to be *accursed*, and adiudged to euerlasting *malediction*, hee was pleased, through the immensenes of his Charitie, to take our *maledictions* vpon himsele, I meane the punishment of our sinnes, that soe his *benediction* might descend on vs. S. Paule, expresses thus much after this manner. *Christ was made malediction that so his benediction might be communicated to the Gentiles.* He was *blessed*, and we were *curst*: But now the case is altered, and we chaunge persons, with one another.

He tooke the place of the *accursed*, in being tormented vpon the *Crosse*, which was dew to vs; and wee are admitted to the freindship of God, and to be his *sonnes*, and the inheritours of the kingdome of heauen, with a thousand other benedictions, which came from our Blessed lord *Iesus Christ*, in whome they remaine for euer.

O wonderfull exchange! that life should dye, to the end that death may liue. *Benediction* is *accursed*, that soe *malediction* may be *blessed*. The sound man is wounded, that soe the wounded man may be cured. The *sonne* is treated as a *slave*, that soe the *slave* may be adopted for a *sonne*. They most cruelly handle him who deserues all pittie; and all the fauour and Regalo falls vpon that person, who deserued hell. In fine what shall we say? They apprehend the innocent, and they release the guilty. The iust man payes for sinnes, Innocency is cōdemned, and the wicked man is iustified. What did Christ our lord choose for himselfe? Our afflictions, and our miseries, to be his recreations & delights. What shall wee say to such a charity as this; but that we are to praise and blesse this lord, day, and night, who hath wrought our redemption; and saluation by a way, which put him to soe much cost.

This is indeede that *hill of Hermon*, that little *hill*; and this soe truly, as that he was esteemed by the relation of the Prophett *Esay*, for the *meanest amongst men*. And for this reason our

Ps. 21.

Lord himselfe saith, *I am a worme and noe man but the dishonour of men, and the abasement of the people.* O thou honour of men, and angels! and how canst thou be the dishonour of men? Thou, who art the aduancement of thy people, and who art the glory both of heauen and earth, what could make thee grow to be *the abasement of thy people*, but onely thine owne great Charitie. For thou to honour vs, didst endure soe great dishonour, that as wee are wont to say of some very base vnworthy man, that he dishonours his whole stocke, soe did they alsoe say of thee, *that thou dishonouredst the whole race of mankinde.* Bee thou Blessed without end. For all the honour, which all the race of mankinde possesse, comes from thee, and through thee. Thou gauest it by the coniunction of thy selfe to them, making thy selfe man, and dying for men and exalting them to an equallity with *Angells*, and euen with *Seraphins*, if themselues will; and ordeyning, that the sonnes of sinnefull *Adam*, they may become the sonnes of God. and the heyres of thy Father, and coheyres with thee; as being thy bretheren, and yet thou; O Lord, art called *the dishonour, and abasement of the people.* Thou didst abase thy selfe O Lord to exalt vs; thou didst abase thy selfe belowe all men, that thou mightest rayse vs, about the *Angells.*

What shall wee render to thee O Lord,

for soe great fauours; but onely that we must tenderly, and profoundly knowe, that if wee haue any thing; if wee be fitt for any thing, and if we be any way acceptable to almighty God, it is wholly by thee; And wee must yeild thee all thanks, and praise, for that thou being what thou art, wouldest yet vouchsafe to offer thy selfe to sufferance of soe great afflictions, for such wretched things, as wee are. Thou diminishedst thy selfe in that *little hill*, that thou mightest exalt vs to that great hill. Thou dyedst on *Mount Caluary*, to the end that wee might liue in the *mountaine* of heauen. And by the *malediction* which fell vpon thee there, thou diddest purchasse, and thou wilt impart to vs that happy benediction of thine. *Come you blessed of my father, possesse, the kingdome which is prepared for you.* They cursed thee, O Lord, and thou blessedst vs. Thy death giues vs life, and thy affliction, ease; Since thou wert content to be *iudged*, it is reason that thou alsoe be our *Iudge*. Lett vs therefore reioyce since hee who loues vs soe much, is to be our *Iudge*; and wee will goe confidently to *iudgment*, since the *Iudge* is of our owne flesh and bloud.

If wee know not what wee may doe, for the pleasing of Almighty God, lett vs looke vp to Christ our Lord, and he will teach vs meekenes, from that *Crosse*. Who being amongst wicked persons, did not curse

them, who cursed him; nor did he reuenge himselfe, though he had power enough, ouer such as did him mischeife: He despised honour, and to be rich, and to be regaled. And to obey the will of his *father* he offered himselfe to the *Crosse*. Hee who wants knowledge, let him come to heere this Doctour, as he is sitting in this Chaire. He whoe will heare a good sermon, let him come to Christ our Lord, being in the pulpitt of the *Crosse*, and he shall be free from errour; because *Truth* which is Christ our Lord himselfe, *shall free him*. And if wee be chaungeable, and weake, in working, let vs looke vpon this author of our faith, and see how he is nayled to that *Crosse*, both hand and foote; and that immoueably, to the end that, by his grace we may be constant, & perseuerant in doing well. He who will goe to Christ our Lord, for the cure of his inconstancy, shall obtaine a perseuerance, like that of *Anna, the mother of Samuell*, of whome it is said; *That she turned her countenance noe more towards seuerall wayes*. He who dwells in Christ our lord, doth not wander hither and thither, but stands fast in goodnes, according to the Scripture which saith, *that such a one is euer cleere, like the sunne; and that his light is not diminished*. For hee who is in Christ, participates of Christ. And so as Christ is *Iust*, he is alsoe *Iust*, if Christ be *firme*, he is alsoe *firme*, though in a farre inferior degree. For, *as in one body, there is but one spirit*, which diffuses it selfe, through all

1. *kings*  
1.

*Ecc.*  
27.

the partes of that *body*, and they all liue by one humane *life*; and not one of them by the *life* of a *man*, and another by the *life* of a *lyon*, or any other beast, soe all they who are in Christ our lord, liue by his *Spirit*, as the *braunch* liues by the *life* of the *vine*, and as the *members* liue, by the *head*. And hee who possesse this *Spirit*, is like to Christ our Lord, and partakes of his conditions; although (as I said), it be in a farre inferiour degree. And hee who hath not the *spirit* of Christ; let him hearken to S. Paule who saith, *If any man haue not the spirit of Christ, that man is not of Christ.*

Rom. 8

Let a man therefore view and reuiew himselfe, to see if he finde a conformity of his soule, with that of Christ our Lord; and if hee haue it, it will be easy for him to keepe the commaundements of Christ, since hee is of the same condition with him. And though he be not yet, of conformity with Christ lett him goe to Christ, and beg his spirit of him, whereby he may be strengthened, according to that which *Dauid* desired, thus, *Confirm mee with thy principall, or cheife spirit.* For it will profit mee little, that Christ came into the world, if withall he come not into my hart. Christ brought downe *goodnes, peace, and loy* in the *holy Ghost*, with many other benedictions. If I liue in wickednes, warre, vngodly melancholy, or inordinate delight, Christ our Lord dwells not in my soule. And it is in effect, with mee, as if he had not come into the world at

Psal.  
50.



all, sauing that it will turne to my greater miserie; for I shall be punished soe much the more, because I would not admitt. of that saluation, which was offered mee, with so good a will.

Christ our lord dyed for vs all, and is ready to receiue vs all. Let vs make towards him; though it be but to doe him curtesy; and let vs not permit that soe great, and pretious labours and afflictions of his, may remaine fruitelesse. The price of them are our soules, if wee will carry them to Christ. Let vs cast our selues downe at his feete, detesting our sinnes, and our former wicked life; distrusting our owne knowledge, and worth, and strength; and so, perseuering to beg, to knock, and to cry out, he will fill vs with knowledge; how to addresse our selues, and with power to worke; and with perseuerance, that wee may not fainte as it is written, *They who confide in our Lord, shall proceede from strength to strength, they shall take the wings of an egle, they shall fly, and not faint.* And since there are more excellencies in Christ our Lord then there are miseries in vs, let vs goe on towards him, acknowledging that hee is our onely remedy; for by this meanes we shall not dispaire through our owne miseries, but take comfort and partake of his excellencies.

Esay  
40.

This my lord, seemed sufficient to me, for the addresse of a person who hath a minde to draw neere to God. But because in your lordship, there is the capacity of two persons, your lordship

will haue neede of two rules. That which is said, may suffice forasmuch as cōcernes your owne particular person; but in respect that you are a man, who haue soe great charge ouer soe many others; it will be necessary for you, to haue more & more care of your selfe. For there are many, who for as much as cōcernes their owne particular cōscience, are good men; & yet they faile in being good Lords, & good Magistrats. And this second parte is more hard, and it is the worke of one who is a kinde of perfect man; for it takes that first kind of goodnes for graunted, and then passeth further on. For hee whoe forasmuch as concernes himselfe, is not Iust, will not be Iust in what he ought to doe towards others. But yet it suffices not for one who hath charge ouer many, that hee be *Iust*, for as much as concernes onely his owne particular person. *Ely*, for his owne part was a good man, but he was not good for as much as concerned his sonnes, since he bore to punish them; & therefore he was greiuously punished by almighty God. So that, great lords haue neede of a manyfold kinde of goodnes, since they haue a manifold kinde of person.

As for this second part, which to be, concernes a cōmon or publique person, me thinkes there is noe better glasse, wherein a man who is a lord ouer others, ought to looke, then vpon that lord of men and angells, whose person he representeth. Hee who sits in the place of another, it is but reason that he haue the properties

Rom.  
13.

of him, whose place he holds. A lord of vassalles is a Lieutenant of God who ordaines, that some shall gouerne and commaund, and that others shall obey. He *who resists those former*, doth by the testimony of S. *Paule*, *resist the ordination of God*, who disposes of all things according to subordination.

Now therefore lett a man consider, what office God exercises towards man; and soe a great lord shall know how hee is to carry himselfe towards his people. God chastises such as erre, without any acceptation of persons, and in this he is soe strict, that he hath not any, who is so great a fauourit of his, but that he shall pay soundly for it, if he giue iust cause. Nay he pardoned not soe much as his owne sonne, though hee owed nothing for himselfe, but onely because he obliged himselfe, to pay for the sinnes of others. Without faile he must needes be farre from acceptation of persons, whoe punished with soe great seuerity, his onely begotten sonne, and such a sonne, and soe deerely beloued, and that for the sinnes of others. There is nothing which should haue power, to make him who gouernes, forbear the doing of his duty; but he is to stand like the staike of a ballace which leanes not, either to the one scale or to the other, that so euery man may haue his owne. There is noe state but it would perish and be vndone, if publique business should be ledd, after the pace of particular affections. And at an instant doth that per-  
son

son leaue to be *publique*, when he hangs neuer soe little towards the *particular*.

Now since the respect of priuate profit, must not bend him who gouernes, much lesse must the respect of any other man's profit make him bend, since he owes more to himselfe then to any other. Christ our Lord is the patterne which is made for all; not onely forasmuch as concerns the priuate cōscience of a particular man, but forasmuch alsoe as concerns any publique person. For hee was a king and soe he is, though not after the manner of this world. But being in the chaire of his *Crosse*, hee said to his mother, *Woeman behould thy soune*. To giue vs to vnderstand that hee who is in the place of a publique person, must renounce all particular inclinations, though it should regard his very *Mother*. And the same example, he alsoe gaue vs, when at some other tymes, he would speak with lesse tēdernes to that Blessed Mother of his. To teach vs how carefull wee must bee, to keepe our selues cleere from particular affection, though some be angry at it, and though our selues endure paine by it, rather then to cherish them, with disgust to God.

There is nothing, to which great lords ought to attend so much (that so they may be well, both with God and man) as truly, & cordially, (and like men who liue in the presence of God) to remaine euer faithfull, & firme to him, with out hanging either to this way, or to that. And this will be easily performed by that great man,

who shall attentiuely consider, that he is but the Minister of God ; as one who but meerey executes, and must not excede the commission which is giuen to him. God places not great Lords in the world, to the end that they may doe, and vndoe, what they list ; but to execute the lawes of his holy will. And though they may account themselues lords, yet are they still vnder the vniuersall Lord of all, in comparison of whome, they are more truly vassalles, then their vassalles are theirs, and their power is as truly limited as their vassalles power is forasmuch as concernes the dispensing with what they ought to doe. Soe that he is to be more fauoured, and beloued, who hath most right on his side, and he is to be most punished, who deserues it most. And thus may any lord resemble the true lord of all, if without acceptation of persons, he giue to euery one according to his workes ; yea and if sometymes he punish most, such as are most fauoured by him. Both because reason would require, that they should offend him least ; and for that alsoe they must not thinke that because they are beloued by him, they may take occasion to doe what they list, & that which reason alloweth not. Freindship should last as long as vertue doth, and enmitie, or opposition, as vice ; For if it be otherwise, woe be to them, who call good, euill, & euill, good.

Your lordship must consider besides, that God hath placed you, in the eyes of many;

whoe take that to be a rule of their liues, which they see you doe. Make account that you are seated in a high place, and that your speech and fashions are seene by all, and followed by the most part of men. If such a fashion be taken vp in Court, if such a manner of speach be vsed there, all men procure to follow it. And if it were the custome amongst great lords, that when one should giue them a buffet vpon one cheeke, they would tender the other, and if it were the fashion for them, to abhorre sinne, and to take it for a point of greatenes, to obey the lawes of Christ our Lord, without doubt, inferiour men would hold it an honour, to doe that which they saw practised by great persons. And for this reason, I belecue, that the Prelats of the Church, and the lords of the world, are a cause of perdition, to the most part of soules.

I beseech your lordship, that as you are a particular man, you will looke into your selfe with a hundred eyes, and that, you will looke into your selfe, with a hundred thousand, as you are a person, vpon whome many looke, and whome many follow. And take care, to carry both your person, and your house, soe ordered, as the law of Christ requires; that hee who shall imitate your lordship, may alsoe imitate Christ our Lord therein, and may meete with nothing to stumble at. The vulgar, is without doubt, but a kinde of ape. Let great men consider what they doe, for in fine that will be followed, either to their saluation, if



they giue good Example, or for their condemnation, if it be euill. And this consideration alone should suffice to make great lords liue like soe many Saints, though it might cost them some trouble; considering how our lord *Iesus*, the sonne of God, would not be a king, but resolu'd by his labour and sweat, to giue rest, and peace to his subiects. And he fledd from prosperities and honours, least otherwise, he might haue giuen occasion of sinne to his seruants, who would haue thought, (if Christ our lord had followed them) that is would also haue beene their part, to pursue the same. All things are to be thought little worth, so that we may procure thereby, that God be serued. And let this be the finall conclusion; That soe much the more attentiuely, a man shall consider, and imitate *Iesu* Christ, so much the better *man*, and so much the better *Lord* he shall bee. For in him wee beganne, and soe also we will end in him.



*A Letter of the Authour, to a Lady in  
the tyme of Aduent, and vpon this  
occasion he perswades her to dispose  
her selfe to receiue the Infant Iesus,  
and to loue him with seruient loue.*

**H**OW busy will your ladyship bee, in this  
holy tyme, preparing a lodging for that  
guest, who is coming to you. Mee thinkes, I  
see you as earnest, as *S. Martha*, & yet as quiet  
as *S. Mary Magdalen*; that soe by your endea-  
uours, both exterior and interior, you may  
doe him seruice, who is drawing neere, since  
hee is soe worthy both of the one and of the  
other, and is, in fine, your lord. O blessed tyme  
wherein is represented to vs the coming of God  
in flesh to dwell amongst vs, to illuminate our  
darkenes, and to addresse our feete in the way of peace,  
and to adopt vs for his brethren, and to designe  
vs for the enioying of the same inheritace with  
himselfe.

It is not without cause, that you desire his  
coming, and that you prepare your hart for his  
habitation. For this lord was desired long before  
he came, and the Propbet called him *The desire of*  
*all Nations*; and indeede hee giues himselfe to  
none, but such as desire him. God heares the desire

*Luke 1.*

*Agge.  
Psal. 9.*

Cant. 4

of the poore, for his eares are laid close to the sighing of our harts, and he cares for nothing els in vs but that. To such a hart hee comes, and cannot deny himselfe, as it is said in the Canticles, *Thou hast wounded my hart, O thou my sister, and my spouse; thou hast wounded my hart, by the cast of one of thyne eyes, and by a haire of thy head.* Is it possible for any thing to be more tender, then that which is wounded, by the sight of a single eye? Is it possible for any thing to be more weake, then that which is tyed fast by one single haire? where now are they, who say, that God is hard to be obteyned, that he is rigourous to be delt with, and insupportable to be endured. Wee must quarrell with our selues, since, because wee will be looking many seuerall wayes, we place not our sight vpon God; nor will wee shutt that eye of ours, which be-houldes creatures, that so with all our thought wee may cōsider God alone. Hee who shootes in a Crosse bowe, shutts one of his eyes, that hee may see better with the other, how to hitt the white; & we, the while, will not shutt vp all that sight of ours, which hinders vs from being able to hunte & wound our lord with loue.

1. Ioh. 4

Let him recollect, and make sure his loue, and lett him lodge it in God, whosoever hath a minde to obtaine God. For as *God is lone*, soe is he onely to be hunted, and taken with loue; and he will haue nothing to doe with them, who loue him not. And if they say, that they know him already as they ought; *S. Iohn* will

tell them that they say not true. But our lord who is wounded with an eye, is tyed with a haire. For that which loue takes, the recollected and reflected thought conserues, that it may not be lost.

And to the end that men might be put into confidence, that they should be able to arriue to almighty God, and that hee hath noe minde to slipp away, he makes himselfe one of them, and layes himselfe in the armes of a virgin, swathed vp hand and foot, without power to fly from that man, who is disposed to seeke him. O celestially bread, which descendest out of the bosome of thy Father, and art laid in the publique places of this world, inuiting as many as will, that they may come to enioye thee, and feede vpon thee. And whoe is hee whoe can endure to withhould him selfe from going to thee, and from receiuing thee, since thou giuest thy selfe, vpon noe harder cōdition, then onely that wee be content to hunger after thee? For doest thou peraduenture aske more of vs, then onely that a soule may sigh for thee, and confessing her sinnes, may receiue, and loue thee?

Great is the misery of those men, who when bread comes to seeke them in their owne howses, they choose rather to dye of hunger, then to stoope to take it vp. O sloath what a deale of mischeife thou doest! O blindenes, what a deale of benediction doest thou loose! O sleepines, what a deale of aduantage doest thou steale away! since considering the promi-

Mat. 7

☉ 21

Mark

11.

Luc. 11

John. 14

☉ 16

sc, that whosoever seekes shall finde, and he who askes shall obtaine, and to him who knockes it shall be opened; it is cleare that if wee proue not well, the fault is ours.

But what? shall things passe still after this manner? Though God himselfe is come to cure vs, shall wee still continue sicke? He being at the gate of our hart, crying out and saying, *Open to mee, O thou my freind, and my spouse*, shall we being all wrapt vp in vanities, suffer him to stand calling there, and not soe much as open him the gate?

O my soule come hither, and tell mee, for I aske thee on the part of God, what, in fine, is that thing, which detaines thee, from goeing all, with all thy forces, after God? What doest thou loue, if thou doe not loue this Spouse of thine? Or rather why doest thou not loue him much, who did soe mightily loue thee? He had noe busines on earth, but to attend to the loue of thee, and to seeke thy profitt, with his owne losse. And what hast thou to doe in this world, but to exercise thy selfe, all, in loue of this king of heauen? Doest thou not see, how all that which heere thou seest, must haue an end, as also all that which thou hearest, which thou touchest, which thou tastest, and wherewith thou doest converse? Doest thou not see, that all this is but cobwebs, which cannot cloath thee, and keepe thee warme? Where art thou if thou haue not thy being in *Iesus Christ* our lord? what art thou thinking? what account art thou

Cam. 4.

making? what doest thou seeke, out of that onely, one, complete God?

Let vs rowse vp ourselues at last, & breake of this badd sleepe; Let vs awake, for it is *broad day*, since *Iesus Christ* our lord who is the light, is come. Let vs doe the *wookes of light*, since there was tyme wherein wee did the workes of darknes. O that the memory of that tyme, wherein wee know not God, might serue vs now for sharp spurrs, to make vs runne greedily after him. O that we could runne, O that wee could fly, O that wee might burne, and be transformed, into him. What must a creature doe, when he sees his creator made man, and all for loue of him alone? who euer heard of such a loue as this, that one louing another, should by loue be converted into that other. It is true that God loued vs, when hee made vs after his Image; but a farre greater worke it was to make himselfe after our image. He abases himselfe to vs, that hee may exalt vs to him. He makes himselfe man, that hee may make vs Gods. He descēdes from heauen, that he may carry vs thither in his cōpany; and in fine he dyed, that he might giue vs life. And now shall it be possible that in the midst of these things, I should lye sleeping and without any sense of gratitude for soe great loue? O lord *illuminate myne eyes*, that they may not sleepe in such a death as this. And thou who hast done vs this great fauour, giue vs alsoe a right feeling of it. For otherwise, the greater the benefitt is, the more hurt it will

Ps. 12.



doe vs in the end.

O Lord open thou myne eyes, that they may consider thee, descending out of the bosome of thy father; and entring into that of thy *virgin mother*, that I may giue thee great thankes for this benefit. Make mee able to humble my selfe for thee. Make mee able to consider thee lying in a maunger, instead of a bed, crying out, through could & being opprest with pouerty; & make me learne thereby, how to cast all delicacy farre from mee. Make thy teares & sighes shew & sound themselues forth in myne eares, that soe they may mollify my hart, & that soe it may deliuer it selfe ouer, as wax, to euery inclination of thy will. And doe not thou permitt, that God should weepe, and that man should haue noe feeling of it; for I know not at which of these two things, wee might wonder most.

Seale vp, O lord, thy wordes in my soule, that I may neuer sinne against thee. Let the blood which thou didst shed for mee, be gathered vp into my hart, and be thou all, my onely loue, that soe thou maist not repent thy selfe, of all these great afflictions, which thou enduredst for mee. It is I, whom thou soughtst, and whome thou seekest still; and for mee thou hast made all those tiltings, and triumphes, and shewed forth all thy liueries, and vndergone all that cost. Let me neuer see my selfe belonging to any other then thee, since thou hast deserued me soe well.

Come Madam, let that hart of yours, now pre-

pare it selfe for God is vpon the point of being borne; and hee hath neither howse, nor bedd, wherein to lye. Let your hart be all inflamed with loue, for the Infant suffers much cold. And yet if your hart be but euen soe much, as luke warme this Infant with his cold, will giue it greater heat. For how much the more cold he suffers for vs, so much the more loue, he shewes to beare vs; & where I finde my selfe to be more beloued, there am I obliged more to loue.

Exteriously hee suffers cold, and yet, through the great loue he beares vs, he can endure noe cloathes; but he lyes naked as soone as he is borne, & naked they lay him vpon the Crosse, because in his bearth, & in his death, he shewed the greatestt excessse of loue.

Madam, you must prouide a cradle wherein you may rock him a sleepe, which signifies the repose of contemplation, and see that you tend, and treat him well, for he is the sonne of a great high king, and he is the sonne alsoe of a virgin, and he takes much gust to lodge himselfe in the hart of virgins; for the meat he eates is flesh, which is crucified & dead. And because he hath a great deale of poore people, amongst his kindred, whome yet he loues deerely well, you must be alsoe sure to loue them, for they are the brethren of our creator. As soone as he is borne in your hart, you must take care to nurse him; and I beseech him to keepe and saue you, for his mercies sake. Amen.

*A Letter to a certaine Lady, who is taught with what disposition she is to receiue Christ our lord, into her soule; and with what care she is to keepe him, and of the great misery where into that soule falls, which commits mortall sinne, and what a great treason it is, to leaue God, and follow the deuill, especially for such as haue beene particularly fauoured by almighty God.*

*Mat. 23*

**T**HE grace and peace of the holy ghost, be in your hart, and assist you in this holy tyme; that you may prepare your soule, for that Infant who is now to be borne. For he hath noe howse, but in those soules which are well disposed to receiue him. He comes as a straunger, and in great pouertie, Giue him your hart, that soe he may say in the last day, *I was a straunger and you receiued mee.* But yet consider withall, that as there is nothing so much to be desired by you as to lodge this Infant in your soule, so is there nothing which requires more care and diligence, then to prepare, the lodging ready, in such fort as he desires. He comes in humility, and pouertie; and they who receiue him must be humble, and poore. He comes to vndertake great labours, and with labour that howse must be adorned, wherein he vouchsafes to dwell. He is chaste, and he loues such as are chaste. And though he be very little, and a

very Infant; yet withall, he is very great, and he is God; and soe it must be no little thing to prepare a lodging for a great God. Our lord is choise and nice, and by reason of some one mortall sinne which some man makes little difficulty to committ, he refuses to enter into the soule. And if he be there already, one mortall sinne, sends him away. And when he is gone, he comes not back againe soe soone; but makes it plaine, by the difficulty which he hath to returne, with how great diligence he is to be kept, by vs; when we haue him there.

O my good lady, and how riche is he who possesse God, and how often in the day were he to looke downe vpon his hart, asking our Lord if hee be there? What chaynes should he cast about him of humble petitions and teares, begging of him as *David* did, in these words, *O lord depart not from mee.* How full of caution ought a man to walke, least he should doe somewhat, which might offend our Lord, & least being offended, he should be gone. For, if hee be all good, what shall it be to loose him, but to fall into the Abisse of all miseries? They are sadd things, which a soule feeles, when it hath lost God; and such, as will hardly be beleiued, though all the world should speake of them. This appeares well in our first parents *Adam* and *Eue*. For *Eue*, looking vpon the fruite of the forbidden, tree, it seemed very beautifull to her eye, and that if she might eate thereof, it would proue very pleasing to her, and giue

*Psal.*  
21.

her great contentment. But as soone as she had eaten, her eyes were opened, to behould those great miseries, which came vpon her by that meanes, & experience taught her, that the bitterness of breaking the commaundment of God, was greater, then the pleasure to haue eaten the fruite. And then she saw, that the apparance which the forbidde fruite had, of being soe very faire, and full of gust, was but a deceite of the deuill, who made a false glasse, for her to looke through. And hee alsoe gaue her a loathing, of those other fruites which God commaunded her to eat. Soe as they seemed vnfauoury to her, and she thought that all the gust, and hidden good, had consisted in that which God forbad.

O how many haue beene deceiued by the deuill, through false imagination; he promising them contentment, & gust; & they afterwards, making bitter lamentation, for giuing credit to him, whome euen before they knew to be a lyer, & the father of lyes: and some, after the end of many labours, and teares, haue sweate hard, to returne into the freindshipp of God, though, through all their life, they continued with this dagger in their hart, of, *How haue I offended God, hauing vouchsafed mee soe many blessings!* And it seemed to them, as if they enioyed not the benefitt of his pardon, through the continual greife and shame, which they had for committing the offence. Others there are, whose being once gone away; neuer turne againe; like ill

made hawkes, whoe flying from the fist of their Lord, fall to feede vpon carryon; and being soe fleshed, retorne noe more; and hauing formerly tasted the foode of Angells, growe to take delight in the huskes of swyne. Of these S. Peter saith, *That it had beene better for them, not to haue knowne the way of our lord, then to leaue it after it was knowne.* And it happens to them as to the dogge who returnes to eate, what he had vomitted, & as to the hogg whoe wallowes in his myre from side to side. And our Lord himselfe said, *That he who puts his hand to the plowgh, and lookes backe is not fitt for the kingdome of heauen;* but returnes to be worldly againe, and is both made an object of scorne to the deuill, and is alsoe placed as a marke to fright others from offending God.

In this sorte did the wife of Loth vndoe herselfe. For God hauing vouchsafed her soe great a fauour, as to deliuer her from the fyre, which came from heauen, vpon Sodom and Gomorrah, where shee dwelt, and commaunding her not to looke backe againe, she obeyed not his voice; but turning her head backe, was transformed into a pillar of salte, which beasts licke vp. And heere it is to be considered, that if God punished her soe seuerely, whoe had not beene a sinner in that Citty, but onely because she obeyed not his commaundement of not looking backe for what can the sinner hope, whoe is deliuered from the punishment of God, through his great

Luc. 15

2. Pet

2.

Luc. 9

Gen.

19.



mercy; if yet dispising that excessive goodnes, he turne back his hart, towards the flesh potts of Egypt, and his sinnes past.

I beseech God euen for God's owne sake, to deliuer euery soule, from falling downe into soe great a misery as this. For as S. Paule affirmes, *it is a fearefull and horrible thing, to fall into the hands of the liuing God, and what is man, that he should be able to endure the wrath and fury, of Almighty God?* For as any huge fire, is able to deuoure some little woefull straw, soe doth the mighty wrath of God, swallow vp the soules & bodyes of all such persons as depart from him. And as when some wife, whoe had beene deerely beloued by her husband, committs the fowle sinne of adultery, that husband is intraged soe much the more against her, at she had bene more beloued by him; soe that wrath of God is very vn sufferable, which he expresses against that soule, which he had formerly drawne out of the captiuitie of sinne, and of bound had made free, and being naked and voyd of grace, had made rich and rarely adorned with the same grace, and of a wicked slaue, had exalted to be his most honoured & beloued wife. What would such a woman deserue, who being vngratefull for soe great fauours; I say not should committ adultery, against such a generous and pious husband, but through whose hart, any such thought should once passe, though shee were a thousand mile off, from the fact.

Who could euer thinke of giuing a buffet, to one that had endured soe many for him; and to put fresh dishonours, & to crucifye a second tyme that person, whose former wounds, it were much more fitt for him to bathe & dresse and allwage, then to add new ones to the old? What kinde of wickednes shall wee call it, (which is able euen to amaze, and astonish the world) for one to leaue God for the deuill, and hauing beene walking in the way to heauen, to goe thrust his very feete into hell; and to like better to haue to doe with God intraged, then with God all gentle and appeased?

Madam, I haue not written this, as thinking that this misery will lay hould on you. For my confidence is not in you, but in him, whoe, with soe much mercy, and pittie, redeemed you, out of the captiuity wherein you were, and taught you soe well, what belongs to his loue, as to haue giuen you cleerely to vnderstand thereby, that hee meant not to vnder-take the busines in iest, neither will hee, that either you, or I, shall make a iest thereof. In this lord who loues with soe great fidelity, doe I place my confidence; and not in you, whoe haue kept so ill correspondance with his true loue. But I haue written this, to the end, that of your selfe, you may hunt out a litle sent, of the danger wherein you are; & that you may recommend your selfe more and more, to our Lord, and in fine, that you may be soe discreete as not to cast away your tyme, in the admitting of

vnprofitable thoughts. Our lord will cleere  
vp these things , and will finish that which  
he hath begunne , and will not take this  
Crowne from mee , and therefore am I in pa-  
tience and hope, that you shall not depriue mee  
of that which God hath giuen mee. You haue  
heere many seruants of God , both men and  
woemen , who recommend you to his mercy,  
with much care, and I beseech him to graunt it  
most completely to you. Amen.



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A Letter of the Authour to a Lady, at the Feast of the Epiphany or three kings. Wherein hee shewes how shee is to goe and adore the Infant Iesus; with those kings; being guided by the starre of faith; and that shee is to offer him the gould of diuine loue.

I Wrote to your Ladyship this last Aduent, of the great fauour which our Lord did vs, in vouchsafing to come to vs, and of the happines of that soule which disposes himselfe to receiue him. I hope in his mercy, that hee is come home to you; and that you haue receiued him with faith and loue. And therefore now, there remiaines noe more, but that you offer your selfe, in perpetuall sacrifice to him, who hath vouchsafed to offer himselfe to you as a deere guest, and that you imitate the faith and presents which were made by those *wise men* to the Blessed Infant as soone as they found him out; as you haue already imitated them in the care they had to finde him. It will doe well, that you contemplate how this great lord is soe humbled, in that poore open stable, and that maunger, where the naturall discourse and humaine reason of those kings, was farre from thinking that they should finde him. But the starre which, with vs, is Faith, refuses expressly to passe any further on, and declares with most resplendent beames as by soe many tongues,

that hee who is aboue all reason, and knowledge, lyes in a place which is hidden from all discourse of reason; that soe wee may learne to belceue, that most firmly, whereof wee finde least certainty.

For if as the starre guided them, soe they had beene guided but by their reason, they would haue gone to looke for this new borne king in some royall pallace; for a person and a place wherein he dwells, are to carry proportion to one another: Our lord vouchsafes to shew a great fauour to them, vpon whom he bestowes a staire, which is the giift of faith; that soe they may seeke God, both when he is wrapped vp aswell in those swadling-cloutes, in the poerty of his birth, as in the contempt and torment of the death of the Crosse; the kings finde him in one of those places, and the good theefe in the other. For both they, and hee, had the eyes of Faith, and that made them prostrate themselves all along and adore him, protesting that they were as nothing in his diuine presence. For if they had knowne him but for a temporall king, how great soeuer hee had beene, it would haue suffized for them, to haue done reuerence to him, as one man vses to another; but for soe great men to prostrate themselves, before an Infant, betokens that they had interior faith, whereby they knew the high Maiesty, which lay hidd in that Infancy.

But now your Ladyship must be sure, that you appeare not empty before this Lord, and

that you thinke not that you giue him any thing, if you doe not giue him your loue. Nothing but God is able to make your Ladyshipp happy; and nothing but your selfe is able to keepe him contented. This loue of his is not ioyned with any interest which regards himselfe, or the value of the presents which are made to him; but it is a true and perfect loue, which requires an vnion of harts. And this is that language, as S. Bernard saith, whereby God, and the soule communicate themselves & speake to one another, in the same tune. If our lord threaten and punish mee, I am not to doe the same; but my duty will bee, to humble my selfe soe much the more, as hee doth more exalt himselfe; but if he loue mee, I must bee like him in that, and I must loue him, saying, with the spouse; *My beloued to mee and I to him.*

O great dignitie of a creature, which is abled thus to draw, in the selfe same yoke with his Lord, and may answear him like, for like, for loue is that thing, which abases hills, and rayseth valleys. Offer your loue to him; whoe for loue of you, did, though hee were soe great, become an infant, and being God became man; and shedd the blood of circumcision for you, within eyght dayes; as being not content that he had shedd teares, for you, when he was borne. Steale not your selfe away from this lord, since you are soe truly his, least you grow to be of them, of whome the Prophett Jeremy saith; he went like one whoe runnes away with him

Cant. 2

selfe. Where are you engaged more deeply? where can you employ your selfe more profitably? where can you exalt your selfe more highly, then by louing Christ our lord, who loued you, and washed you with his blood, and giues euen himselfe to such a one as loues him, and makes him of a man, grow to be a kinde of God.

Bee very carefull of your selfe in this busines, and soe that you offer *gould* to the Infant *Iesus*; For as a little *gould* is more worth then a great quantitie of other mettall, soe a little true loue, is more pretious, then much copper, and such other mettalls of feare, and proper interest, or any other such affects as rise from these. Many are wont to measure themselues by their doeing many good workes, and they neuer consider that God respects nothing in them, but onely the hart from whence they rise; and that one man shall please God more who doth lesse good workes, then another whoe doth greater, if he who did the lesse, haue the greater loue. Some man by fasting from some one meale, or by giuing some very little almes, shall be more pleasing to our lord (as the widdow was, then many others whoe gaue great almes) because he doth it with more loue then they. And heerein appeares the greatenes of our Lord, since noe seruice which wee can doe him, how great soeuer it may be, is great in his sight, if the loue of the partie be not great. For hee whoe hath neede of nothing, and cannot possibly encrease at all in riches, or any other good, why should he

Marke
12.

care for ought which can be giuen him, but onely to be beloued, which is soe acceptable a present, as cannot be refused by any. And soe much is God in earnest when he requires it of vs, as that he punishes with eternall death, the person whoe grauntes him not his loue.

What thing is soe farre from selfe loue in the desires of any thing, as hee whoe needes noe seruice which can be done him thereby; and whoe againe hath soe much desire of any thing as he whoe soe requires a man's loue, as to punish him with the torments of hell, who will not giue him that loue and giue it truely, yea, and that soe as it may exceede all other loues. And therefore Saint Augustine might say with reason, *O lord what account doest thou make of mee, since thou commaundest, mee to loue thee; and doest threaten mee with huge miseries if I loue thee not.*

Let this be therefore your prime care, to attend to the loue of our Lord. For this very purpose, he made himselfe soe very little. For by how much the more he conceales, and as it were dissembles his Maiesty, soe much more doth he declare his goodnes, and thus doth he the more inuite our loue; which lookes more at ease vpon the littlenes which he tooke, then vpon the greatnes which he naturally possessed.

His wisdom lyes hidden by his being made an Infant whoe could not speake. His power is alsoe bound vp by certaine swathing-cloathes, and he endures bitter colde. And all this to the end, that the more of his other attributes

he hides from vs, the more he may declare his loue to vs; that soe we alsoe may loue him the more, as we finde him to haue suffered more for vs. It is certaine that to see him tremble with colde doth kindle vs much more, then if wee saw him well, and warmly cladd, and if he felt noe paine. And therefore hee shall doe very ill, whoe denyes him his loue, since it was bought at soe much cost of this Infant; and after the rate thereof, will it cost that man whoe shall deny to giue it.

Psal.
65.

Hee whoe offers this loue, offers *the holocaust with the marrow* to our lord, as *David* saith. For as fire burnes vp a whole beaste; soe doth loue consume the whole man, both within & without. The fire of true loue, will not endure that the straw of exteriour vanities should remaine vnburnt. How shall that man be able to loue pompes and shewes who cordially loues the Infant *Iesus*, being layd in a poore maunger, if it be true that loue must make louers like to one another. It is a great blessing and light, which makes vs able to see God heere beloue, that soe we may know how to walke for the pleasing of his diuine Maiesty. And since he walkes in a very contrary way to that of the world, let vs resolute to make our choice of that guide, whome we meane to follow; since wee cannot walke in both; and since the world runnes headlong vpon error, and since Christ our Lord is the truth which saues such as beleeue and follow it.

Iohn.
14

And let this *holocaust* haue *marrow* in it, for marrow is a soft thing, and doth soone melt. And soe doth that hart which loues our lord; and whether the matter concerne the seruice of the same lord, or els the good of a man's neighbour, such a one will not expresse either drynes, or harshnes, but sweete mildenes, hee alsoe hath care to keepe his loue as safe, as the marrowe is within the bone. But before you can arriue to that marrow, it is garded first by the skynne, and then by the flesh, and lastly by the bone it selfe. The man who loues, places all things which he possesseth, and desires, before that which he loues; that he may sooner loose all that, then that the person beloued by him should once be touched. And he hath a strong and firme purpose as if it were made of iron not to venture the loue of our lord, though it should cost him whatsoeuer he either is, or may euer be.

Such gould as this it is, which you must offer to the Infant, who is borne soe poore; and you must open your treasures, for that purpose, as those kings did. For if this hart be not opened, which is the treasure-howe, all the labour is lost. For in that case whatsoeuer it bee, which is offered, is not gold but counterfect stuffe; & he takes the best to himselfe, and giues the worst to Almighty God. Open therefore your hart, and conueigh the Infant newly borne into it, since that hart alone liues, in which hee is. And since he is of

Marke
2.

Cant. 1

soe little weight, doe not lay him downe; but weare him in your bosome, like *that handfull of Myrrh*, whereof the spouse speakes. Conuerse with him with all reuerence because he is God; and yet take courage to communicate freely with him, because he is an Infant; for within he hath his hart as serene, and sweete, as you may well conceiue by his exteriour apparance. Take heede you lett him not fall, for he must be kept with great care; but if your loue be not great, you will either forgett him quickly, or els lay him soone aside, as thinking that he weighes too much. And soe that you negotiate with him in such sort, as that you giue not ouer, till you perceiue by good coniectures, that both you loue him, and are beloued by him. For till a soule feele this, it euer liues in feare, and sadnes, and as vnder the burden of a law, but when it comes to this passe; there is nothing which can easily trouble it, when it considers that God loues it, and it loues God. I beseech him that it may soe happen to your Ladyshipp. Amen.



*A letter of the Authour to a Lady wherein hee shewes
what the coming of the holy Ghost wrought in the
Apostles, and what it workes in them whoe dis-
pose themselves to receiue it, and how they are to
dispose themselves.*

GOD send you a good Feast of whitson tide,
not by hearesay, but by experience; & that,
in this solemnitie your hart may feelee that
which the faithfull seruants of Christ our Lord,
when they were assembled in that meeting-
place did feelee, by the infusion of him into their
soules, who deprivied them of their weakenes,
and deliuered them from their ignorances, and
fulfilled the bosome of their soules, with soe
great ioy, as might well giue the world to vn-
derstand; that the blood of Christ our lord was
not shedd in vayne, nor his prayers to his Father
made in vayne; since by meanes thereof, a parti-
cipation of the diuinitie, was communicated.

O how often, when they saw themselves soe
deified, and that they were made soe richly the
louers and beloued of God, did they sing a
world of prayes to *Iesus Christ*, their lord and
Maister; as knowing well, that he had sent
them this giift as he was God, and had deserued
it for them as he was man. For according to
what our lord himselfe had ptomised, the holy
ghost as soone as he should become, was to

Iohn. 16

make knowne *Iesus Christ*, our Lord, and to giue testimony of him, that soe the Disciples, and the world might knowe him, and by knowing him might vnderstand withall, that all good was to come to them by his meanes, and that they were to render him seruice, and expresse all gratitude to him, as to their true and abundant benefactour; and that soe, they might remaine faster tyed to him by the cordes of loue, in this absence, then formerly they had beene in presence; & might know by experience, what a puissant *loue* the *holy ghost* is, and how ardently he makes that Blessed word of God, to be beloued, from whome himselfe proceeded, and in whome he reposes, and that they should make noe difficultie to publish and proclaime him to the world, though it should cost them their liues.

Apo. 20.

If we had a parte of this solemnity heere within our very harts, we should be sure to celebrate it exteriorly as we ought. And if our soule were bedewed with some drop of the water of this plentifull Riuer which issues out of the throne of God, & of the lambe, the thirst of this whole world would be soone quenched in vs, and wee should be refreshed by this heavenly dew from that drynes, and stiffnes wherein wee yet remaine soe negligent, soe barren, and soe accursed.

O how much would we finde our selues obliged to our Redeemer, when wee should sensibly feele, that wee were indeede redeemed

by him, and that our finnes were drowned, that our sorrowes were spent, and abundance of ioy imparted insleede thereof. Wee would not then complaine of paines, of banishments, of absence from what we loue, of wanting those things which seeme most necessary to vs, and in fine of any inconueniēce. For soe powerfull is this spirit, and the fire thereof, that it strives vpward, and makes vs soe loue & confide in God, that noe water of sorrow, and affliction hath power to quench it, but it remaines euer quicke, and conveyed with such strength into the bowells of the soule (which are soe mightily inflamed) that it kills all that which liues ill; and causes, that euen death it selfe cannot conquer him, who is mortified by the coming of this holy spirit.

This is that deare guest, whoe cures the wound, which the absence of Christ our lord had made in their harts whoe loued him, and fills vpp that empty place, which was made therein by his departure. And now if he were able to comfort and free men from that sorrow, which was caused by the absence of Christ our lord himselfe, more easily will hee be able to comfort vs, in case of the absence of creatures, if we be in any paine thereby. This is hee, who is soe full of care of his orphans, who ouershadows them with strength, from on high, and who covers and keepes them warme vnder the mantle of his protection, and makes them know that they haue one in hea-

uen, whome they may with confidence, but without presumption call Father; hee repaires that which is ruined, he illuminates that which is darke, he heates that which is colde, he straightens that which is crooked, he refreshes that which is ouerwearyed, and he is dayly giuing vs new strength, which makes vs fly vp toward the mountaine of God.

Madam, it will be reason that such an excellent present as this, should put vs into great appetite, and that wee sell all the affections of our hart, for the purchase of this Iewell, which onely is able to make vs happy. The newes of it passes before our doores, and the noyse sounds in our cares, of how he comes downe to men, and is glad of a habitation in their hartes; Let vs not suffer him to passe by, but let vs constraîne him to visitt, and comfort vs, that we may serue him yet more. And considering in whose name wee may desire him to stay with vs, he will not neede to be much entreated; for the Father sends him, through Iesus Christ his sonne our Lord.

Christ our Lord is he who obtayned the holy ghost for vs. For otherwise, what had that most high spirit to doe, with coming downe to vs, whose are but soe much flesh, which is impure, and weake, and enclined to all kinde of ill. This spirit exceeds vs incomparably more, then the heauens exceede the earth, if it were not for that, he who is of heauen, being engendred by the Father, did abase

himselfe ſoe farre as to become *man*, the ſignification of which word is to be *earthly*. And ſo God being humaned, and tempored with our weakenes, did labour and ſweate, and, vpon the coſt of his life, did obtaine for vs, that this ſpirit which created the heauens, ſhould abaſe it ſelfe ſoe farre, as to dwell in thoſe potts of clay.

Let vs giue thanks to Ieſus Chriſt our Lord, and lett vs gather the fruite of his labours. And ſince the *holy ghoſt* comes downe willingly to dwell with vs, in contemperation of the meritts of Chriſt our lord, let vs not be ſoe vngratefull for either of theſe two great fauours, as thereby to looſe them both. The moſt high will abaſe himſelfe to theſe meane perſons, that he may bee their Father, and their guide, and how then can wee be ſuch woeful ſotts, as to ſay *Noe*, to him. Let vs goe forth to receiue him with loue, whoe comes with loue, and lett vs doe it with great deſire, for where he is deſired he is well content to ſtay. Lett vs be like him whoe ſaid. My ſoule hath deſired thee by night, and in ſpirit; and with the very bowells of my ſoule, I watch towards thee in the morning. By night he deſires to enioy thy holy Spirit, who findes himſelfe to be afflicted, and places not his confidence in his owne arme, but ſends out ſighes to this ſpirit, as to the comforter of the ſorrowfull, and the caſer of all ſuch as are in paine. And *in the morning* hee will bee content to watch, whoe

ſay. 26

Agge.
2.

makes it not one of his last cares, how it may be fitt for him to furnish vp that inward howse; but the cheefe of them all is to consider, how he may be able to obtaine this fauour of our Lord. And being thus desired, and inuoked, infallibly he will come; for soe did Christ our lord himselfe, who was called the *Desired of all the nations*; and he loues all such as desire to possesse him.

Matth.
26.

Let vs call vpon this *holy Spirit*, with the speach both of our tongues and of our soules; but, we must be sure that the howse be not ill furnished, and soe without prouision, that after hee shall be inuited, and satt downe at table, we may haue nothing for him to eate. Let vs mortify our flesh, for that is the foode whereon hee feedes, and which he likes soe well. For as for the flesh which liues, he flies from it, as farre as he can, and it stinckes worse to him, then a dead dog would to vs. Let vs mortifye our owne opinion and iudgment, that soe we may be ruled by his; for two heades will neuer gouerne a house well, if that which knowes least be not swayed by that which knowes most. And let vs renounce all our selfe conceits, for these are the Capitall enemyes of this heauenly spirit, which teaches vs to say, *Not my will but thy will be done*. Let vs be diligent to cleanse our conscience by penance, and confession, from all impurity, and euery graine of dust, how little soeuer it may bee. For this guest is most pure, and cleane; and it is not

fitt

fitt to lodge him in such a howse as may disgust him. Let vs keepe peace, both at home and abroad; for euen vnquiet and wrangling folkes, are wont to dissemble their little brawles, for the honour of some principall guest.

Hauiug lodged him in our howse, let vs giue him good attendance, since he hath made it a pallace. For he is a mighty king, and it is against all reason, that hauiug him with vs at home, we should be gadding abroad to see vanities. Let vs then shutt vp the doores, and cast our selues prostrate at his feete, and let vs tell him with truth, that there is nothing which shall draw vs from him, and that we haue giuen this answere to all the world, that it must leaue vs, and him alone together. And soe lett vs enioye him; for he is able to make vs happy, and so as that nothing can depriue vs thereof. If you carry the busines thus, you shall be comforted in all that, wherein yet you haue discomfort; and *you shall drinke of the Riner of the delights of God* till euen you be inebriated thereby. And I shall alsoe be comforted when I shall see you in the hands of him whoe knowes soe well how to keepe you, and instruct you, and eternally to saue you. It is he, whome I beseech to be your succour.

*A letter of the Authour to a certaine
Preist. Hee shewes how he may pre-
pare himselfe ; and what considera-
tions are most profitable , when he
goes to celebrate at the Altar.*

R Euerend Father ; I beseech our Lord that the delay which I haue vsed in making my answere , may be recompēced with being true , and profitable to you , for your demaunde is of great importance ; and soe would the answere alsoe bee , if it were such as I haue said. You aske me what preparation is best , and what consideration is most profitable , when you goe to celebrate the mystery of the *body* , and *bloud* of our lord and Sauour *Iesus Christ* ; because you feare that the thing , which of it selfe is soe helpfull , may yet proue hurtfull to you , for want of due preparation.

You know already , that there are different complexions of mens bodyes ; and soe is there variety of inclinations , in their mindes , yea and soe alsoe are the gifts which God imparts to men , very different. Some , he leades by one meanes , and others by another , and therefore there can be noe such common rule giuen , as may square well with the generallity of all men , concerning the consideration which may be most profitable for the aforesaid action. But this

is certaine, that that consideration will be best for any man, which God imparts, and whereby a man findes himselfe to be moued most. And he whoe hath any knowledge such as a man may haue in things like these, (whereof there is noe certaine faith, nor cleere euidence that his Preparation, or *consideration* growes from the impulse of God), hath noe reason to chaunge it for any other, till our lord chaunge it. And this is to be tryed, by giuing account thereof, to some person, who hath experience in these things, together with prudence; and soe to take the resolution.

But now there are others, whoe finde not themselves particularly moued, to vse, this, or that Consideration. And yet it is alsoe necessary, for these men to impart the notice of their inward disposition; soe to trye whether they haue neede to be carryed by the motiue of *Loue*, or *fear*, they being either sadd, or cheerefull; and the remedy is to be applyed, according to the necessities wherein they are. And because I incline to thinke, according to the relation which I haue receiued concerning you, that the state wherein you are, is of a person proficient in vertue, and that it is fitter for you to exercise your selfe, vpon he considerations which may prouoke you to the seruour of loue, with reuerence, then vpon others; I say, that to this purpose, I know of none better, then that which may giue vs liuely to vnderstand, that our lord with whome we goe to treat, is

God and man, and what the cause is why he comes to the altar.

Certainely Sir, it is a blow of great force, towards the awaking of any man, to consider, and say this to himselfe, in good earnest, *I am now going to consecrate Almighty God; to hold him in my hands; to haue audience of him; and to receiue him into my bosome.* Let vs ponder this well; and if it sincke into vs by the grace and spiritt of our lord, it will be sufficient, and superabundant, for the making that result towards vs, whereof we haue soe much neede, that soe (according to our frailty,) we may performe that office as we ought.

Who is hee that can choose but be inflamed in loue, by thinking, I goe to receiue an *infinite Good*? who will not tremble, with an amorous kinde of reuerence, at his presence, before whome the powers of heauen tremble? and who will not resolue, neuer to offend him more, but still to praise him, and doe him seruice? Who will not be confounded, and euen mourne with greife for hauing offended that Lord, whome hee hath present there? who will not confide, vpon such a pawne? whoe will not take hart, to goe through this desert, by the way of pennance, with such Prouision? And finally, this consideration, (when the hand of our Lord helps it on) doth wholly chaunge a man, and taking him from himselfe, doth euen swallow him vp; some tymes by reuerence, some tymes by loue; and at other tymes, by other most

powerfull affects of the minde, which are produced by the considerations of his *Presence*. Which affects, though they doe not necessarily flow from these *Considerations*, yet are they a moit ready helpe therevnto, if the man, as we vse to say, will not be a stone.

Soe that you shall doe well to exercise your selfe in this thought. Make account that you heare that voice, *Ecce sponsus venit, Deus vester venit. Behold your spouse is coming, your God is coming.* And shutt your selfe vp in your hart, and then open it to receiue that, which vses to streame from such a lightning. And desire you, of the same Lord, that for that very goodnes of his, by which he hath vouchsafed to put him selfe into your hands; for that same goodnes, I say, he will giue you a true feeling thereof, that soe you may csteeme, reueare, and loue him, as you ought. Importune him that he permitt you not to be in the presence of such a Maiesty, without feare, reuerence, and loue. Accustome your selfe to thinke as you ought, of the presence of our Lord; although you should then entertaine noe other consideration but that.

Consider them whoe stand in presence of kings, who, though they say nothing; yet see the modesty, the reuerence, & the loue wherewith they stand, if they stand as they ought. But it is better to consider how those great ones assist in the Court of heauen, in presence of that infinite greatenes all trembling at the reflection of their owne littlenes, and burning in the fyre

Maith
25.

of loue, like persons whoe are, as it were, consumed, in such a furnace. Make account, that you enter amongst those *Graundes*, whoe are soe richly adorned, and soe well behaued; and soe diligent in doing seruice to their Lord. And then being placed, in such society as that, and in the presence of soe great a king, thinke of it as you ought, though, as I was saying, you haue not, at that tyme, any other consideration then that.

My meaning is, that it is one thing for a man to haue what to say to the king; and it is another, to know (which may be done with scilence) how to stand in his presence, and there to carry himself as he ought. And this is that vnion of the soule with our lord, which a man shall doe well to procure during the tyme of *Massé*, and to hang wholly vpon him, iust soe as when he is in his Cell, vnited with our lord, in the most secret retired corner of his hart. And this, in such sort, as that the *wordes* which he reades, may not be of any distraction to this *vnion*; for he shall reape more fruite by it, then by them; though yet, it be true, that he is to haue regard alsoe to the *wordes*; but he is to accustome himselfe whilest he hath his hart vnited, and present with God, to carry that attention withall, to what he doth, and saith, as is conuenient.

Deere lord, and what doth the soule of that man feelee, when hee carryes him in his hands who made election of our *B. Lady*, & enriched her with celestiaall graces, that she might be

made fitt to liue and conuerſe with God-made man. And when he compares her hands, and armes, and eyes, with his owne, what confuſion doth he grow to haue? How ſtraightly will he hould himſelfe to be obliged, for ſuch a benefit? what caution will he uſe that he may keepe himſelfe wholly for him, whoe hath done him ſoe much honour, as to put himſelfe into his hands, and to come to them by them wordes of *Conſecration*.

Sir, theſe things are noe bare wordes nor noe dead conſiderations; but they be arrowes, ſhutt ſtiffly out, from the ſtrong bowe of Almighty God, which wound and wholly chaunge the hart, and which make it deſire, that at the end of *Maſſe*, it may at lardge conſider that worde of our Lord, *Scitis quid fecerim vobis? Doe you know what I haue done to you.* Deare lord that a man could conceiue *quid fecerit nobis Dominus*, What our Lord had done for vs in that houre. That a man might taſt him with the palate of his ſoule. O that a man had true weights, where with he might weigh out, this great benefit. How happy ſhould he be, euen in this world; and how, after the end of *Maſſe*, would he loath euen the ſight of creatures; and would eſteeme it to be a torment, that he muſt treat with them. And his ioy and life would conſiſt, in pondering, *Quid fecerit ei dominus*, what our lord had done for him, till the next day, that he ſhould retourne to ſay *Maſſe*. And if our Lord doe at any tyme giue you this light, you will know what ſorrow and ſhame

John.
13.

you ought to carry in your hart, when you approach to the *Altar* without the same. For he whoe neuer enioyed it, doth not know what a misery it is, to want it.

You may add to this Consideration of the person whoe comes to the *Altar*, the reason why he comes; and you will there see a resemblance of the loue, of the Incarnation of our Lord, and of his holy Natiuity, and of his life, and death; renewing that which passed heere-tofore vpon his sacred person. And if you shall enter into the most inward corner of the hart of our Lord, and if hee vouchsafe to teach you, that the cause of his coming, is a violent and impatient kinde of loue, which permitts not him whoe loues, to be absent from the party beloued; your soule will euen faint vnder such a consideration as that.

A man is indeede moued much, by pondering after this manner, *Heere I haue Almighty God.* But yet, when hee considers, that he comes meerey out of the great loue which he beares, (like one betrothed who cannot liue a day, without seeing and conuersing with his Spouse), the man I say, who fceles this, would be glad to haue a thousand harts, wherewith to correspond with such loue, and to say with *S. Augustine* O Lord what am I to thee, that thou shouldest commaund mee to loue thee? what am I to thee, that thou shouldest see much desire, to make mee a visit; and to giue mee an embracement, and that, being in heauen, with them who know soe

well how to loue , and serue thee , thou yet vouchsafest to descend to this creature , who knowes very ill how to serue thee , *but very well how to offend thee.* Is it possible that thou canst not content thy selfe , O lord , to be without mee. Is it possible that thy loue of mee , should draw thee downe ? Blessed maist thou bee for euer , who being what thou art , hast yet placed thy loue , vpon such a creature as my selfe ? And is it possible , that thou shouldest come higher , in thy royall person , and that thou shouldest put thy selfe into my hands , as if thou wouldest say ; *I dyed for thee once , already ; and I come to thee now , lett thee know , that I repent not my selfe thereof , but if it were needefull , I would dye for thee yet , a second tyme.* What launce could remaine in the rest , after such a deare expression of loue as this ? Who , O lord will euer be able to hide himselfe from the heate of thy hart , which warmes ours with thy presence , & the sparkes fly out to all them who are neere it , as out of some mighty furnace. And as such a lord as this , (my good Father) doth the God of the heauens , come to our hands , and we being such wretches as wee are , doe yet conuerse with him , and receiue him.

Let vs now conclude this good subiect , which is soe fitt to be felt and put in execution. And let vs beseech this lord of ours , who hath already done vs one fauour , that now he will doe vs another , forasmuch as his blessings , vnlesse we valew them , and thanke him , and

serue him for them, will not be of profitt to vs. Or rather as *S. Bernard* saith, *The vngratefull man, by how much the better hee is, by soe much hee is the worse.* Let vs consider well how wee liue, throughout the whole day; least els our lord punish vs, in that tyme when we are at the *Altar*. And throughout the whole day, let vs carry this thought in our harts, *I haue receiued our Lord. At his table I sitt; and to morrow I shall be with him againe.* By this meane; wee shall be able to auoyd all ill, and wee shall take hart, towards the practise of all good. For that which is done from the *Altar*, our lord is wont to rewarde, at the *Altar*.

Luc. 7

To conclude, I say you must remember how our lord complained of *Simon the Pharisee*, for that, entring into his house, hee gaue him noe water for his feete, nor any kisse to his cheeke. To the end we may know that he desires, that in the howse where he enters, we should giue him teares, layd at his feete for our sinnes; and loue which makes vs salute him with the kisse of peace. I beseech our lord to bestow this *peace* on you, both with your selfe, and with your neighbours; and soe as that it may spring from perfect loue; which I desire may torment you heere, for the offences, which your selfe and others committ against our Lord. And in heauen I desire, that he should make you enioye it; esteeming the good of God for your owne, and more then your owne, because you loue him more then your selfe. For his loue, I begg

of you, that if in this letter, there be either litle, or much, which needes amendement, it may not want your helpe; and if there be any thing good in it, giue the thanks for that, to our Lord, and remember mee when you shall be at the *Aliar*.

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*A letter of the Authour to some deare freindes of his, who were afflicted by a persecution, which was raysed against them, he animates them much, to a loue of the Crosse, and the imitation of Christ our Lord, whereof hee speakes with great tendernes,*

**B**lessed be God the Father, of our Lord Iesus Christ, the father of mercyes, and the God of all consolation, whoe comfortes vs in all our tribulation; in such sort, as that wee alsoe, are enabled to comfort them who are in any kinde of affliction. And this we doe, in vertue of that consolation, wherewith God comfortes vs, For as the tribulations of Christ abounde in vs, so through Christ, see our consolation is alsoe abundant.

2. Cor  
1.

These are the wordes of the Apostle Saint Paule. Three tymes he was scourged with rod-des; fīue tymes with whippes; and once he was stoned, in such sort as that he was left for dead; and persecuted by all the generations of man kinde; and tormented withall sorts of afflictions, and troubles; and this not in any small

2.  
Cor. 11

number of tymes, but as himselfe saith elswhere, *wee are euer, euen drawne to death, for the loue of Iesus Christ, that soe his life, may be made manifest in vs.* And in all these tribulations, he doeth not onely not murmure, nor complaine of God, as weake persons are wont to doe, nor doeth he afflict himselfe otherwise, as is vsed by them, whoe loue their honour and their ease; nor doeth he importune God to remoue them from him, like such as know not the valew thereof, and therefore desire not such company, as that, nor doeth he esteeme them as some sleight, and little fauours, as they doe whoe loue not to suffer much; but leauing all ignorance, and weakenes farre behinde him, he prayses our lord in them, and giues thanks for them, as for an extraordinary blessing, Esteeming himselfe happy, to suffer somewhat for the honour of him, whoe suffered soe great dishonours; that soe he might draw vs out of that true dishonour wherein wee were, being slaues to the basenes of sinne; and he beautified, and honoured vs, *with his spiritt, and with the adoption of the sonnes of God,* and he gaue vs an earnest, and a pledge that we should enioye the kingdome of heauen by him.

O my brethren, whoe are soe very much beloued by mee, God will open your eyes, that you may consider, how great fauour he doth vs, by that which the world thinks to be disfa-  
uour, and how much wee are honoured, in being dishonoured, for seeking the honor of

God, and now high honour is reserved to vs, for that abasement, wherein now we are, and how sweete, delightfull and deare armes, our Lord extends towards vs, to receiue such as are wounded in the warre for his sake, whereby those very woundes doe incomparably outstrip, & euen make sweete all that gall, which the afflictions of this life can giue. And if we haue any true vnderstanding, we shall conceiue a vehement desire of these imbracements.

For whoe will not desire that, which is wholly amiable, and desireable, but onely such a one, as knowes not what true happines is. But know you for certaine, that if those festiuities of heauen please you, and if you desire to see, and enioye the same, there is noe way to it more secure, then that of suffering. This is that path, whereby Christ our Lord, and all his seruants are gone before vs; and *which he calls streight, and saith, that it leades men to life.* And he left vs this instruction, to the end that if wee should haue a minde to be where he is, wee might walke by that way, where he went. For it is against all reason, that the sonne of God, hauing gone by the way of dishonour; the sonnes of men, should goe by the way of honour, *since the Disciple is not greater then his Maister, nor the slave, then his Lord.* And God forbidd, that our soule should repose, and rest, in any other thing, or should desire any other life, in this world, but onely to suffer, vnder the Crosse of Christ our lord. Though yet, I know not, if I

Matth

7.



haue said well , in calling that affliction which is suffered vnder that *Crosse*: For to my seeming, it is as the delight of a soft bed, full of roses.

O thou *Iesus* of *Nazareth* ( by which word it is signified that thou art all full of *flowers* ), how sweete is that odour of thee , which awakes in vs, those insatiable desires, of eternity ; and makes vs forgett the afflictions , which we suffer heere, whilest we consider for whome they are endured , and with what reward they shall be paid. And whoe is hee that can loue thee at all , and yet doeth not loue thee *crucified* : in that *Crosse*, thou diddest seeke mee, thou diddest cure mee, thou diddest deliuer mee, thou diddest free mee, thou diddest loue mee, giuing thy life and bloud for mee , by the hands of base and cruell wretches. And therefore in the *Crosse* , will I seeke thee , and vpon that I finde thee ; and finding thee , thou helpest mee ; and thou deliuerest mee from my selfe, who am the creature which contradicts thy loue, wherein myne owne saluation doth consist. But now (being free from the loue of my self, which is thine enemy ) I answear thee, though not with equallity , yet with a kinde of poore resemblance , of that excessiue loue, which thou carryedst to mee vpon thy *Crosse*; I louing thee, and suffering for thee, as thou by louing mee, dyedst of loue for mee.

But woe is mee , and what shame couers my face, and what sorrow seizes vpon my hart, whoe hauing beene soe much beloued by thee,

which thy foe great torments doe well declare )  
I yet loue thee foe little , as may be seene by the  
little , which I endure for thee. I easily confesse,  
that all men deserue not foe great happines,  
as to be marked out for thine, with the marke  
of the *Crosse* , but yet, consider what a sadd  
thing it is, for mee to desire, and not to obtaine;  
to aske and not to receiue ? How much mo-  
re, when I begg not delight, and ease; but afflic-  
tion, and paine, for loue of thee.

Tell mee, since thou will haue mee to be  
both thy *Herald* , and the *Auntient* , whoe am to  
carry the *flying colours* , of thy *ghospell* , why  
thou doest not apparell mee , from head to  
foote, with thine owne liuery. O how ill  
doth the name of being thy seruant belong to  
mee , whoe finde my selfe naked , of that  
garment , wherewith thou diddest foe cor-  
dially , and foe continually , and foe aboun-  
dantly goe apparelled ? Tell vs , O beloved  
*Iesus* , ( euen by that sweete *Crosse* of thine )  
was there peraduenture , any one day , when  
thou diddest put off , that robe of suffe-  
rance , to cloath thy selfe with repose and  
ease ? Or was there any one day , wherein  
thou diddest put off that rough coate, which  
foe wrought into the very rootes of thy  
hart , as to make thee say , *My soule is heauy* ,  
*euen to the death* ? O noe, thou wert farr from  
resting , because thou wert farre from lea-  
uing to loue, and this lone made thee alwayes  
suffer.

And when they stript thee of thy cloathes; they cutt out, vpon the *Crosse*, ( as if it had bene vpon some table ) another garment for thee; and that so long a one , as to reach from thy very head to thy feete; and there was noe part of thee , which was not dyed, with thy most pretious crymson bloud. The head Crowned with thornes, the face, loaden with buffetts, the hands peirced with two nayles , and the feete with one; a bitter one to thee, but deare to vs; and all the rest of thy body, embrodered ouer, with soe many stripes, as that it was noe easye thing, to number them.

Hee whoe beholding thee, shall loue himselfe , and not thee, shall doe thee an extreame wrong. Hee whoe seeing thee, in such a plight, shall flye from thar, which may make him like to thee, and hee whoe hath but little desire to suffer for thee, doth not know thee with perfect loue. For hee whoe soe knowes thee, doth euen dye for loue of thee, when he considers that thou dyedst for him, and he more desires dishonour for thy sake, then hee esteemes honour, & then all that, which the whole world, ( which is both a deceiuer and doth deceiue ) can giue. Away with it , away, let it all hould his peace, in comparison of thy *Crosse*, whatsoeuer it be in this world, which flourishes most; and yet is soe soone withered. And let worldly people, be euen confounded with shame, since thou, soe much to thy cost, hast fought & ouercome, by thy *Crosse*. Yea and lett them euen  
alsoe

alsoe be ashamed, who are held for seruants of thine, and yet reioyce not in that, which is contrary to the world; notwithstanding that thou wert soe reproached, and abandoned, and contradicted by this blinde world, which neither doth nor yet can see that *Truth*, which is *Thy selfe*.

For my part, I am resolved to hould thee fast, though all other things be wanting to mee (which yet in true account, can neither deserue the name of *all things*, nor indeede, of *any thing*, but of perfect misery and a meere *nothing*) rather then I will remaine of any other colour, then thou art; though otherwise the world wherein I liue, might be all mine. For all those things, which are not the thing, which thou thy selfe art, are rather affliction, and burden, then true happines, but in thy being ours, and our being thine, consists our true ioy, and riches, for thou alone, art all our *true good*.

I had forgotten my selfe my deere brethren, in that whereof I beganne to speake; and to beseech, and admonish you, in the name of Christ our Lord, that you be not troubled, nor brought to wonder, (at a straunge thing, and not familiarly knowne by the seruants of God) at these persecutions, or rather the shadowes thereof, which are come vpon vs. For this hath beene nothing but a tryall, and *examen* of that lesson, which we haue beene learning continually, by the space of fīue or six yeares, saying, that *we must suffer, we must suffer*.

for the loue of Christ our lord, Behould wee are now, at the very gates. Let vs not be troubled like children, whoe are not willing to repeat their lesson. But comfort your selues, in our Lord, and in the strength of his power, who loues you, and whoe will defend you. And though he be but one, yet he can doe more, then all the rest, for hee is omnipotent. You neede not alsoe feare, that hee wants knowledge, how to doe it; for he can be ignorant of nothing. And now consider, whether it be reason, that any man should be moued, whoe is tyed to Almighty God, with those three soe hard knotts, of an infinite power, an infinite wisdom, and an infinite loue.

Let not the menaces of them who threaten you, breede you any trouble. For I for my part, giue you to vnderstand, that I value not all their threatens, at the weight of one single haire. For I am noe where, but in the hand of Christ our Lord; and I haue great compassion of their blindenes. For the ghospell of Christ our Lord, which I haue preached in that towne, is hidden from their eyes, and S. Paule affirmed, *that the God of this world, which is the deuill, did blinde the soules of the Infidells; to the end that the glory of the ghospell, might not shine vpon them.* But I desire much, and I cordially begg of our Lord, that he will haue mercy on them, and that he will heape benedictions vpon

2.  
Cor. 4

them; in lieu of the curses which they cast on mee; and glory for the dishonour; which they doe mee, or ( to speake more truely ) for that which they desire to doe mee. For as for mee, I am fixed in this, that there is noe honour for a man vpon this earth; but to be dishonoured for Christ our Lord.

Doe you alsoe, my deere freinds; after the same manner; and be Disciples of him; whoe gaue *a kisse of peace*, to that person, and *called him freind*; who had sould him, to his enemyes. And vpon the *Crosse* he said, *Pardon them, Father, for they know not what they doe.* Consider in all your neighbours, how they are the creatures of God; and that God desires their saluation; and then you will take heede, of wishing ill to that man, to whome God desires soe much good. Remember how often you haue heard from my mouth, that *wee must loue our enemyes*; and that, with great repose of minde; and without speaking ill of any. Passe ouer this fitt of tyme; for our Lord will quickly bring on another. And be very well awake, that you may not goe backe to reuerse any one iott of that good; which you haue begunne; for this would be extreamely ill done. But settle this truth in your hartes, that he whome you haue followed, is the lord of heauen, and earth, and of life, and death. And that in fine, though all the world

Matth.

20.

Luc. 23.



should say *may*, his truth must preuaile. Labour you to follow that truth, and whilest you are doeing soe, doe not onely forbear to feare men, but feare not deuills noe nor euen Angels, if it were possible for them, to be against you. Be very carefull to be silent amögst men; but be sure that your hartes, speake much in prayer, to God, from whome all our good is to come. And his pleasure is, that we should obtaine it; and especially by meditating vpon the *passion*, of *Iesus* Christ our Lord. And if you suffer any thing, by the tongues of euill men ( for, in fine, you suffer nothing els ) take it in discharge of your sinnes, and as a particular fauour of God, whoe will make you cleane, by the tongues of those euill men, as it might be with some brush or rubber; for those tongues will be fowle thereby ( since they vtter fowle things ) and your selfe will grow cleane by suffering, and you will be sure of happines in the other world.

But in the meane tyme, I will not, by any meanes, that you esteeme your selues for better, then them, whome thus you see to goe in errour. Because you know not how long your selues may continue in doeing well, nor they in doeing ill. *But worke your saluation in feare and in humility*; and soe hope that your selues shall gett to heauen, as not to iudge with all, that your neighbour is not to goe thither. And soe value the fauours which God hath done to you, as that withall you touch not vpon the imper-

fections of your neighbours. For you know what happened betweene the *Pharisee*, and the *Publicane*, by which example we must be warned. Luc. 18

There is noe sanctity assured, but in the holy feare of God, wherein, I would haue you euen grow old, as the holy *Scripture* saith. Soe to giue vs to vnderstand, that wee must not onely feare God, when first we come to his seruice, but euen to the very end. This feare is noe sadd, or irksome kinde of thing, but full of saour and gust; and it takes away all leuity, and effusion of hart; and it makes a man not venterous, to approue his owne actiōs as good; though perhapps in themselues, they be well done. But he leaues the iudgment, both of himselfe, and of all the world, to Almighty God. As *S. Paule* said, *I iudge not my selfe, but he whoe iudges mee, is our Lord*. This is hee, whome you must feare, if you will perseuer, in doing well; and if you will not haue your building fall, but stand safe, till it may rise and reach to the most high God. But now this must be done by *loue*, which I beseech our lord Iesus Christ, to giue you. Amen. Pray for mee very cordially, as already I beleiue you doe. For I hope in God, that hee will heare you, and that he will giue mee to you, for your seruice, as in former tymes. Eccl. 2

*A Letter to a Lady who was growen a widow. He comforts her in the death of her husband, and animates her to carry her afflictions with patience.*

**I** Haue deferred to write to you, out of a beleefe, that my letter would be of little power, towards the mitigating of that great sorrow, to which they said, you were growen subiect. And I thought I should take a better course to be vttering my selfe to our Lord who is the Lord of all comfort, and to be recommending you to him, then to be speaking to you, by my letters. But yet because they haue beene demaunded with soe great instance, which serues to assure mee, how much they are desired, and because our lord hath power enough to doe what he lists by the meanes euen of dead letters, I would not faile to doe as I was commaunded, and that to which I was obliged, beseeching our lord that by meanes thereof he will be pleased to breede, that comfort in your hart which I desire.

Our Lord hath soe disposed, as to haue you try what tast these afflictions haue, which are gathered in this vale of teares, and they not of the gentler but ruder sort. Let his name

be blessed, his iudgments adored, and his will obeyed, since that which the creature owes to his Creatour, is all reuerence and subiection, not onely in those things which are delightfull, but in those others alsoe, which are most painefull. Now to make tryall of this obedience, God is wont to teach vs, in that which lyes next our harts. To the end that wee may vnderstand, that for soe great a lord, we must be content both to doe, and suffer great things.

*Abraham* carryed excessiue loue to his sonne *Isaack*, and God was pleased to try him in that. A great loue it was which *Iob* carryed to his seauen sonnes, and yet God tooke them all away, in one day. And after this manner, is he wont to proceede with such as he loues. For by this meanes both they are made capable, of testifying their loue to him, and by the same hee takes occasion, to doe them great fauours. I know well, that *flesh* and *blood* haue noe vnderstanding of this language, and that they onely imploy themselves, vpon feeling the greife and losse, which they sustaine, without caring for other things. But if God be in vs, we must restraîne our sence, and make it obedient to reason, and to the will of our Lord. And though it trouble vs much, yet must we not let this flesh of ours ouercome, but remembring the anguish of our Lord, which made him sweate dropps of blond, and say *Father, not*

*Genes*  
22.

Luc. 22

*my will, but thy will be done*, we are to say the same, if we meane to be knowne for his disciples; since he will know none for his vassalls on earth, nor for his companion in heauen, but the man who carryes the *croffe* vpon his backe, and whoe will follow him as the sheepe his sheapheard, though it should cost him his life.

Math.  
10.

Tell mee of what wee can iustly complaine in our afflictions, since by them our sinnes grow to be discharged, and our selues made to ressemble the sonne of God? For what a bould irreuerence should it be, that slaues would not passe, by that lawe, by which their Lord did passe, and that *adopted sonnes* should not be content to endure that, which the *naturall sonne* endured; who was more beloued by God the Father, then his first begotten sonne? and

Esay.  
53.

whoe was more loaden with variety of paines then hee? *Hee was the man of greife, and he who knew by experience, what belonged to affliction.* And if you be able to count the droppe of the sea, you may alsoe perhaps count his sorrowes.

Math.  
26.

Will it then seeme reason to you, that the sonne of God, being soe in anguish, and all wounded with greife, euen to the death, wee should passe all our liues, without drinking once of *vinegar and gall*? What is become of that shame, which wee ought to haue, if heere wee should lett him suffer alone, and yet pretend to raigne with him in heauen?

Let all creatures be at last vnbeguiled and



know, that if *the king of heaven* did enter into his kingdome by tribulations, we alsoe must enter in by the same way. There is noe other way but *Iesus Christ and hee crucified*; & whoesoeuer seekes any other, will not finde it, and whoesoeuer walke by any other, will loose himselfe, and hee will see, that though it may be a kind of vn-sauoury thing, to suffer in this life, it is worse to suffer in the next. O blindness of the sonnes of Adam, whoe take noe care of the future, soe that the present may passe to their contentment. Not valewing that which brings in true profit; but that which giues vs gult. Not looking towards reason, but passion. And therefore doe they lament when they ought to thinke themselues happy, and they reioyce when they haue more cause to mourne. What is all this present prosperity, but a smoake, which by little and little will be dispersed, in such sort as that wee shall see nothing of it? And what are all the yeares of our life, but a short sleepe, out of which when wee awake, wee finde our selues but to haue beene abused. And vpon any little trouble, which arriues, we are drawne to forgett our former pleasures; yea and it giues vs, a kinde of paine to haue enjoyed them.

If then, wee finde soe great inconstancy in this, why doe wee not seek that other? And since wee see every day, that this is slipping out of our hands; why doe wee not seek that which lasts indeede, and will make our felicity



eternall? If hitherto wee haue beene in blindness, let vs now at length open our eyes. And if prosperitie did once tell vs, that there was somewhat heere, which might content vs, let now the gall of tribulation be applyed to our eyes and giue vs light to see, that, in this world, wee are truly miserable, and that we are not in our owne Country, but in a very painefull banishment; and soe *raising first our hartes to heauen, let our conuersation be alsoe there.*

This is the end why our Lord hath punished you, that you may make more, and more account of him, the more you see your selfe, in want, otherwise doe not conceiue that God takes pleasure in your paine, but because he is mercifull he hath a tender feeling of your teares. Onely he will put this touch of wormewood into your cupp, that soe hauing discharged your hart, of all humaine comfort, you may haue your leaning place vpon him alone. God hath taken one comfort from you, but it is to giue you another, for soe he is wont to doe. He hath made you a widow, but it is that he may make himselfe your Father, since, *Father of the forsaken*, is his name. Many afflictions will not faile to offer themselues to you, in this widowhood; and in many things you will finde the want of him, who was wont to remedy you in them. And in many of your freinds, you shall finde little helpe, and little fidelity and lesse gratitude; but in all these things, God will haue you make re-

course to him, and conferre with him, about the troubles you shall be in, and that, as with a true Father, you ease your hart, with him. And if with that hart you call vpon him, and trust your selfe in his hands infallibly you shall meete with a sure refuge, in all your difficulties, and a perfect guide in all your wayes. And in any tymes without your knowing by whose meanes, or how it comes to passe, you shall finde your busines done, to your hand, much better then you could haue imagined; and you shall then vnderstand by experience, how great a freind God is, to the afflicted; and how truly he dwells with them, and makes himselfe a solicitour of their causes.

And if at any tyme, he doe not giue you that, which you desire; it will be to giue you that which shall be fitt. For so doth this celestially phisitian proceede, with them, who goe to him for their recovery; and whoe haue a greater desire, to be cured, then that their taste be pleased. Depart not you, from his hands, and cure, though it should put you to much paine. Desire him not to doe what you will, but what he will. Let your weapons, be your prayers, and your teares, and they, not lost teares, for that which our Lord hath taken from you, but liuing teares, for that our Lord may be pleased to pardon him and to saue you.

For what doth that superfluous paine

serue which they tell mee you giue your selfe, but onely, for the adding of sinne, to paine. But now you know, that as wee haue no liberty to laugh, idely or vainely, soe neither haue we any to weepe superfluously. But both in the one, and in the other, we must be obedient to the holy will of our Lord. Why doe you complaine? why, I say, doe you complaine? Either you are a sinner, and then you are to be cleansed by this affliction; or els you are a iust person, and then you must bee tryed, that you may be crowned. Whether it be the one or the other, you must giue thanks to our lord, with your whole hart, and resolue to loue the end and reason of this correction, though the thing it selfe be vnpleasing. This we are taught by *holy Scripture*, which relates how *Hester kissed the end of Assuermus rod.*

*Hester.*  
5.

Let not your tyme passe away, in glutting your eyes with teares; but for the loue of our Lord, apply your selfe to send your hart vp to him, and to prepare your selfe for that passage, whereby you see others march before. It is enough, Lady, it is enough, that you haue already made soe large a feast to flesh and blood. Dry your eyes at last, and let not that tyme passe in bewayling death, which was graunted you for the gayning of life.

Call to minde, that our Lord droue them out of the howse, who lamented the death of a yong maide; and he said *that she was not dead, but that she slept.* For indeede amongst Christiãs,

to dye is but to fall a sleepe, till that day come, when we shall awake againe, to take our bodies, and so to raigne with Christ our Lord, both in body, and soule. And consider, that hee for whome you weepe, *is not dead but sleepest*; and that, in a sleepe of peace, since he both liued and dyed a good Christian.

Why should it trouble you soe much, that our lord would draw the man whome you loued, out of this place, which is soe miserable, and would carry him into the way of saluation? And if he haue left some troubles to you, take them vp with a good will, soe that he may goe on to his repose. And if his absence afflict you much, yet be comforted with this, that shortly you shall see him againe; since our dayes in this life are soe very fewe, and one of vs hath soe little aduantage ouer the other, in dying a little sooner, or later. You shall doe alsoe well to conceiue, that our Lord tooke him away, because hee was well prepared, and that he hath left you heere, to the end that you may well prepare your selfe. And since you serued our Lord with alacrity, in the state of matrimony, serue him now in the state of widowhood, and in the trouble of that state, with patience. That soe, if then you gayned *thirty fold*, you may now gaine *sixty*. And soe you shall leade a life, if not of gust, yet, at the least of great profit, towards the purging of your sinnes; towards the imitation of the Crucifixe; and towards a most certaine purchase of his

eternall kingdome.

But for the obteyning of all this, you must demaund grace of our Lord, with prayers, with teares, with vsing to read deuout bookes, and with receiuing the celestiall bread of the most *Blessed Sacrament*. And soe lift vpp your deiected hart, and walke roundly on. For before you can gett to heauen, you will haue a longe way to make. And if you be to enter there, this will not be the last affliction, which you shall haue. For the Iewell which you expect, is of soe inestimable a valew ( it being God himselfe ) that how much soeuer it cost, it can neuer be deere. And since you are one day to possesse it, you are now to reioyce in the hope thereof. And complaine not of your afflictions; but say; *soe great is the good for which I hope, that I feele not the misery which I haue.* Let Iesus Christ our Lord, accomplish all this in you, as I desire, and begg of him. Amen.



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A letter of the Authour to a virgin whoe was disposing her selfe to leaue the world, and to consecrate herselfe to God: he animates her in that purpose; and shewes the great blessings which shee would finde, both in life, and death, by the espousalls which shee meant to make with Christ our Lord.

Deuout seruant of Iesus Christ. The contentment which my soule tooke in vnderstanding of the new purpose you were grown to haue, of taking the king of heauen for your spouse (yow who might soe well haue matched your selfe heere on earth) was so very great that I know not with what words to expresse it. And though when it was tould mee, it were new to mee, as not hauing vnderstood thereof before; yet neither was it wholly new; for already I had in a manner eyed you out, for that lord, who created you, and I had begged of him as a particular fauour, that he would bestow you vpon mee, for himselfe. Blessed be his holy name for euer, who hath now done it soe very completely, as I knew not, soe much as how to wish. But that ioy which your soule founde before in seeing it self soe disintriqued from all the basenes of this earth, and finding it selfe already to haue receiued that pledge, and pawne of loue from that heauenly king; what was it els, but

a cleare signe, that this mutation which you haue made, proceeded not from any incōstancy of your humour, but from the worke of God, who hath conueighed his hand into your hart, and therein hath produced that desire of heauen, which now you haue. And he also gaue you that great ioy, as a testimony, and earnest penny of those many, and great, and pure ioyes, which if you proue faithfull to him, he resolues to giue you in heauen; the least whereof, is incōparably more to be esteemed then a husband of this world, and children, and estate, and whatsoeuer els the whole earth can giue. O if you had but tryed, how sweete God is, to that soule, which turnes her backe to the world, to place her eyes vpon her Creatour. O if you did but know, what that sweetenes is, of the celestiall spouse, towards the comforting of those soules, who cast all transitory delight away, and like chaste turtles refuse to take comfort vpon earth; but send vp sighes for loue of their Lord, who is in heauen; & who are like the doue which returnes home to the hand of the owner, as cleane as shee went forth, without touching any dead body, soe much as with her secte.

What is there soe flourishing in this world, which is any better then a dead, and stincking carkasse? And for what then doth it serue vs, to ioyne our selues to that which will infect vs, and which may leaue vs thirtie thousand tymes more disgusted with the bitterness which fol-

lowes,

lowes, then with the pleasure which it yeilded for the present. You must render Christ our Lord many thanks, whoe hath giuen you light, whereby you know how to distinguish betweene that, the pretious, and the base, betweene eternall and temporall, betweene an immortall God, and a mortall man. And for hauing giuen you grace, to make soe happy an election, as whereby God is accepted, and man despised; and in that for the loue of that heavenly bedd of state, the care of any earthly bedd is throwne aside, how rich soeuer it might haue beene. Be therefore faithfull to him, whoe takes you for his spouse, and who will be sure to be so faithfull to you, as to make you finde by experience, that hee is not in iest, when he calls himselfe the pure *Spouse* of pure *Virgins*; for you shall finde the assembly of all blisse in him. Nor can it proue like the marriages which are made betweene flesh and blood, wherein vsually the little contentment, which is had at first, is followed by the bitternes of repētance. But this worke of ours giues not onely contentment at the first, but the more you conuerse with this Lord, the better you shall know him, and the better you know him, the more you will loue him. For he is not like men, who, when they are more frequented, let vs easily see that they haue more faults; and he who was a good husband vpon the marriage day, within a yeare proues such, as that there is noe living with him. But in Christ our Lord, you shall see

nothing which may disgust you, and as little in that Blessed mother of his, who is the mother in lawe, to all the spouses of her sonne: O blessed houre wherein that good purpose was sowed in your hart, and much more blessed, will that other bee, when you shall finde your selfe so visited by your spouse, as to make you say, O my Lord, and when could I deserue these fauours of thee, that I should finde this hidden treasure, for the purchase whereof, to pay the price of a thousand liues, were to buy it very cheape.

O how happy and prosperous is this marriage to be, and of how excessiue ioy, both to heauen and earth. God the Father is pleased to see, that there be soules on earth, whoe loue his onely begotten sonne soe well, as that for his loue, they leaue the loues of flesh and blood, not onely those, which are forbidden by his lawe, but euen those of marriage which are lawfull. For it is a signe of greater loue, when for his sake, we forbear that which we might lawfully vse. The sonne is he to whome the soule is espoused; and for this hee dyed, that he might haue some soules which would loue him at least with spirituall purity; and others whoe might doe it not onely spiritually, but euen with the body alsoe vntouched. The holy Ghost is most pure, and farre estranged from flesh, and when he findes a soule which resolutely despises carnall delights, there doth he lodge his eyes; and fills them with spirituall

comforts , and will neuer permitt that the soule be empty , which shall refuse to feede vpon carnall foode. Our Blessed Lady is the mother of the spouse , and they are very like one another , for shee alsoe is all amiable , benigne , a beginner , a protectour , and an aduocate of virgins , and shee highly reioyces that there is virginity vpon earth , for that is the flower which shee planted. There want not pages to giue attendance at this marriage , for the Angells are seruants to the king of heauen , and ready for all that , which the spouse shall neede. Neither yet is there want of children which the world is wont to desire soe much ; and they come without throwes of trauaile , and without paine in bringing vp , and without that greife which growes , when either they liue not well , or dye too soone.

The children of this marriage are good workes , which be rightly called a man's or woman's fruite. What comfort will he feele , when for the loue of Christ our Lord , he conceiues a good purpose , to giue an almes , or some such other thing ; and when afterward he shall put it in execution , what pleasure will he take by the birth thereof ? These children giue both ease , and honour to their mother. This Spouse hath noe neede of a dowry , for the children which shee brings , will bring it ; and that soe richly , as wherewith she may gaine , and purchase heauen it selfe. And they make their mother liue in soe perfect ease , that I

giue you my word , that when you compose your selfe to sleepe at night , you shall finde your selfe in greater peace, and rest, then if you were Mystres of the whole earth ; and whatsoever can be desired therein.

And tell me now what can be thought of in this world , which may arriue or euen approach to the least of these aduantages ? For if there be any little paltry pleasure heere, euery hower of such pleasure carryes with it the counterpoysse of more then a hundred howers of greife and paine. And if heere there be any pleasure without paine, it will at last haue an end, and either the spouse will dye before her fellow spouse, or els he before her, and soe all proues paine. And besides the death of children, it is a greife to a mother to part from them, euen vpon other occasions, in such sort, as that they enioy not one another.

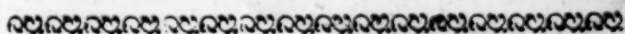
But reioyce you O virgin in Christ our Lord. For your spouse shall neuer dye. And when you dye you will be hemmed in by your children, which are those good workes that you haue wrought; and they will not put you to paine by your leauing them, for they goe with you, into the other world; and they accompany you euen to the very throne of God, and they will plentifully repay all the labour and charge, which you haue beene at with them, and the mother shall be made happy for the loue of the children. More ouer death makes noe diuorce in this case, but rather puts

the spouse, and her fellow spouse together. And he shall deliuer vs, for he is the Lord of life and death. And noe deuill shall presume to steale her away, whome God hath taken vnder the protection of his fauour; and hath honoured with the name of his spouse. Then will the Angells come and serue, and present her before Almighty God, singing prayes to him, and powring forth benedictiōs vpon her, and saying to her after this manner. *Come O spouse of Christ, receiue that crowne which is prepared for thee by our Lord.* The virgin mother will not then absent herselfe, being accompanied with a world of other virgins, who haue done in this world that which you are doing now, and are farre from repenting themselues thereof. In fine you shall goe out of this world, in company of your Peeres, where our Lord hath already prepared that celestiall bedd of state for yow, that you may eternally be full, and rich, and royally prouided for, in the house and presence of our Lord God, contemplating that infinite beauty of his, from one moment to another, one hower whereof is so high a reward, that by way of recompence it farre exceeds the proportion of what you suffer, yea and all those afflictions which all the men of the whole world did euer suffer, in tyme past, or can euer suffer, in tyme to come.

There shall you possesse all good, and there shall you haue obtayned all that, for

which you were created , and you shall bee
soe very full of God , as that it cannot be ex-
pressed nor soe much as thought. For there
thall you finde the whole bosome of your sou-
le, euen to regorge with ioy, like one whoe
were ingulfed into a whole sea of vnspeakea-
ble sweetenes, whereby he were enuironed on
all sides. Then shall you see, and exclaime, and
enioy, and possesse the Lord of all things, and
say , *whome I haue loued I haue obteyned ; and
whome I haue sought I haue found ; and hee for
whome I left the world is growen my pay, and my
reward, and him will I praise, and loue, through
the eternitie of all eternities. Amen.*





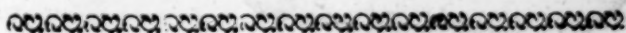
*A Letter written to a deuout person
wherein is treated of Humility and
Pride, and of the perfection of the
loue of God.*

GOD giue you Sir a good Lent, and that
soe you may exteriorly take ashes, in the
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holy *humility*, which is signified thereby, may
euer haue a resting place in your soule. For to
whome our Lord giues true knowledge, and
greife for what he was, at that tyme when he
went estranged from God, him hath he deli-
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and him doth he make capable of all those spi-
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all mischeife is pride, and he whoe is possessed by it,
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is, of vices. For as kings are not wont to goe a-
lone, soe is *Pride* accompanied with many sin-
nes. And soe alsoe on the other side, *humility*
is neuer alone, since according to Saint Iames.
God giues his grace to such as are humble, which
Grace is the Mother of all vertue.

The proud man seekes after honour, and
afflicts himselfe when he is contemned but the

which you were created , and you shall bee
soe very full of God , as that it cannot be ex-
pressed nor soe much as thought. For there
thall you finde the whole bosome of your sou-
le, euen to regorge with ioy, like one whoe
were ingulfed into a whole sea of vnspeake-
ble sweetenes, whereby he were enuironed on
all sides. Then shall you see, and exclaime, and
enioy, and possesse the Lord of all things, and
say , *whome I haue loued I haue obteyned ; and
whome I haue sought I haue found ; and hee for
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person who is humble, is out of countenance when hee is well treated, and is glad when he is despised, because he findes that Iustice is done thereby, which Iustice he loues, as a person whoe is truly Iust. The proud man, is euer in want of somewhat, because how much soeuer he haue either of his owne, or by the giuft of others, he still conceiues himselfe to be worthy of more, but the hūble man is alwayes in abundance, yea and in superfluity, for he acknowledges himselfe to be vnworthy, euen of the very earth whereof he treads, yea, and he esteemes hell it selfe, to be a punishment which comes short of his sinnes. The proud man cannot endure nor liue with any body, noe nor euen with himselfe, in peace. But the humble man can liue with all the world, for he abases himselfe to all, he endures all, esteeming them for his betters, in his very hart; To the proud man it seemes an vnsupportable thing to obey the will of others, whether it be of God or man; but the man whoe is humble submitts and diminishes himselfe, and soe is enabled to goe in, by the strait gate of doing the will of others, whether it be of the Creatour or of the creatures.

Great are the blessings which comes to vs in these ashes of *humility*, and men must take heede, that they be not found without it, vnlesse they meane to be without God. For S. *Augustine* saith, *How high art thou O Lord, and yet the humble of hart are the house wherein thou chooselt*

to a weu! And the holy Scripture saith. *Vpon whome will I looke? or vpon whome shall my spirit rest, but vpon the person who feares, and trembles at the voice of my wordes?* This humility, which makes a man thinke basely of himselfe, is farre from being abase thing, nor is it a fruite which growes on earth, but in heauen it is, and God impartes it to such as digg deeply in their owne dunge, raking vp and ruminating vpon their faultes and frailties, with great diligence: for amongst those pouerties and miseries is this pretious Iewell wont to bee founde. And through our sinnes, we haue soe much matter to worke vpon, by way of examining, and bewayling the same, that, vnlesse it be some man who will absent his eyes from looking vpon himselfe, there is none, who may not be sure to finde cause, and cause enough, not onely to be humbled, but euen confounded.

Wee be to vs! if we be found to be of them, of whome God saith, *Thou art become as the face of a strumpet, nor wouldst thou blush.* For what thing is there more deformed then the impudent boldnes of such a person, as hath so much reason to be full of shame? And who is he that dares once cast vp his eyes to God or his creatures, if he consider well, how he hath offended him, & made himselfe vnworthy of them? who is there amongst vs, who failes not in the perfect loue which he owes to God? since wee loue him not with our whole vnderstanding, beleiuing his truth with that firme constancy

which is fitt; and enterteyning those considerations, those thoughts, and purposes, by meanes whereof, we might doe him more faithfull seruice? who is he who loues him with his whole hart, not giuing any parte thereof to others, yea or to himselfe, but onely in God and for God? and who renouncing all proper interest, hath proceeded to loue God, for God himselfe? And he who shall consider, how little he hath mortified his passions, and what a stiffe warre he makes against the kingdome of the loue of God, will easily discetne that he loues not God with all his soule? And our Lord commaunding vs alsoe to loue him with all our strength, we are yet content to doe it, with such a deale of repidity, as wee may well desire him to pardon. For, the strength which wee employ vpon complying with the loue of our selues, and appetites being foe aliue in vs, makes vs mightily faile in the diligence which we owe to the seruice of God, and to the seruour of our loue of him. S. Augustine saith, that the encrease of Charitie in vs, is the decrease of our owne appetites and desires; and then will our charity be perfect, when there shall be noe such desires in vs at all. Now by the name of such desires, he vnderstands that inordinate selfe loue which euery one beares to himselfe. And because amongst all them who descended of Adam, there is noe one, (excepting onely *Iesus* Christ our Lotd, and his most sacred *Mother*) who hath not found in himselfe, some excesse of this selfe loue; therefore is there none

of them, who hath not fayled somewhat of perfection in the loue of God. For when the loue of my selfe is wholly aliue in mee, the loue of God is dead; and then is a man in state of Mortall sinne. And when the loue of God liues and raignes in mee (in vertue of which loue I fully purpose not to offend God mortally) then am I in state of grace, though I may faile somewhat, of that perfect loue of God, because still I comply in somewhat with the loue either of my selfe or of creatures. And from this want of diuine loue, doth grow our faultines in our other workes, because that is the life of them. From hence alsoe proceede the faultes we make in the loue of our neighbours, by our not hauing compassion of their miseries; nor taking ioy in their blessings, as concerning persons who are very straightly ioyned to God, and adopted in the Sacrament of Baptisme for his children. And we alsoe faile in our workes towards them, because we faile in our loue to him who said. *That which you haue done to any of my little ones, you haue done to mee.*

Now from the defect of these two Lones, of God, and of our neighbour (which are the rootes of our good workes) many other imperfections grow into those very workes which we doe, though sometymes such workes themselves, are not sinnes, nay being performed in the state of grace, they are meritorious of eternall life; But of such as these (if we meane to liue in the way of humility and truth) wee are to giue

the glory to God , and to yeild him humble thanks, who holpe vs to embrace that which was good with our free will, and ordeyned, that it should be meritorious , by that *Grace* which through his mercy, he bestowed vpon vs.

Now wee must not, vpon this reason, forbear to sift out those faultes with care, which we comitt to these actions of ours ; but it is a much more secure practise , to consider very particularly, that which is faulty in vs, then that which may goe for a point of vertue. And be well assured , that how much soeuer you shall consider, and sift, yet still there will much lye hidden from you, in regard whereof you shall haue reason enough to say, with deepe sighing to our Lord, *O cleanse me from my hidden finnes.*

Hence comes it , that wee loue not our neighbours , in such sorte, as God would haue vs, or at least, not so much as hee would haue vs. Hence comes it , that wee tollerate not their imperfections, nor fly from giuing them disgusts. And in fine from hence grow all those other faultes , which defile our soules like filth, which is euer dropping as from a sore. Our finnes are greater then any thought of man is able to vnderstand , and onely he who created our hart and cleerely penetrates to the bottome of it, is able to comprehend what our frailty is. And many tymes doth that discouer it selfe to be filthy before his iudgment, which seemes, in the sight of ours, to be very perfect. There-

fore as *Iob* hath showed vs the way we must feare all our workes, how good soeuer they may seeme to vs, and we must not take pleasure in our selues by reason of them, nor delight our selues therein, euen in the most secret part of our hartes. For he onely is pleasing to God, who is displeasing to himselfe; he onely is Iust in the sight of God whoe knowes that grace and Iustice proceedes from the mercy of God. There is not a thing, from which God is more auerted, then a hart which carryes liking to it selfe. For God in such a one findes noe vessell empty, into which he may powre the riches of his mercy, and soe such a hart remaines with the naturall pouerty, wherewith, and wherein it shall still cōtinue, because it would not abase and empty it selfe, that soe the waters of Grace might runne into it, and soe it might liue contented in God, and might bring forth fruite, as a garden would doe, wherein there were abundance of water.

All our good comes from God; & he whoe beleuiues that of himself he is able euen to moue his tongue towards the saying soe much as *Lord Iesus*, that person makes himselfe God since he attributes that to himselfe which onely belongs to God. And God giues himselfe to vs vpon condition that we must acknowledge this truth: That in him, & of him, comes all our good, and not from our selues. And the more good we haue, the greater debtors of his wee are, and soe much more we haue, whe-

reof to accuse our selues, as not corresponding to greater fauours by greater seruices, and to greater benefits by greater acknowledgments. He who is taught by the diuine truth, attributes nothing to himselfe, but *Not being and sinning*: For if wee remoue all that which God gaue vs when he created vs, and which euery day he conserues in vs; wee shall not finde any *being* in vs, but onely a *nothing*; and that to nothing we should returne, as of nothing we are made. And taking alsoe away the fauour of God which through *Iesus Christ* is communicated vs, what should become of the greatest Saint on earth, but that which became of *Peeter*, when he denyed his Lord, and of *Paule* who persecuted him, that had redeemed him; and that which euery one findes by experience, that himselfe was, before our Lord carried his hand ouer him, taking from him his old hart, and giuing him a new one in place thereof.

Iustification is nothing else, but a resurrection of the soule which was dead in sinne, and now liues by the spiritt of that life, which God infused into it, by the death of his blessed sonne. And as that body should bee both madd and foolish, which would attribute life and motion to it selfe, and not to the soule which dwells in it, and giues it life; soe is that soule deadly blinde, which esteemes that the life of good workes, which she findes her selfe to haue,

doth proceede from her selfe , and not from the spirit of that life, which was infused into her by Almighty God. And sometymes God punishes such soules as these, by taking away that which formerly hee had giuen them , to the end, that obseruing that they can neither see , nor heare , nor taste , nor in fine , doe that which formerly they did , it may be plaine to them that it was some other , who imparted that life which was in them ; and that they did but receiue it ; & that the soule is noe other thing without the grace of *Iesus Christ* , then the body is when the soule departs from the same.

And therefore my freind, be sure that thou see noe other thing in thy selfe, but faultes, and know that thou hast nothing else of thine owne. If our Lord discomfords thee , consider how weake and poore thou growest , and with how little conformity thou receiuest that, which thou doest soe well deserue. If he comfort thee , consider with how little humility thou receiuest it , it being reason that thou shouldst soe much the more abase thy selfe, as God honours thee ; and that by soe much more thou shouldst be confounded with shame , as thou seest, that God treats thee, as though thou wert good , when indeede thou art not soe. Consider how little profitt thou makest of the inspirations, and inward speeches of our Lord ; and how often our Lord saith somewhat to thee , and how soone thou forgettest to put it in execution ; it being reason , that euery

word of his, should last with thee all the dayes of thy life; without any neede of repeating it. How often doeth our Lord infuse pretious liquor into thee, and thou, hauing a hart all full of holes, doest suffer that to bee spilt; which in reason, thou shouldst keepe a long tyme? And though it would be fitt, that how much more God comforts thee, soe much more thou shouldst forgett and neglect the comforts of this world, and soe much more vnite and shutt vp thy soule, to the end that thou mightest againe and againe receiue God into it, it happens sometymes, that by the comfort, which he giues vs, wee are made more giddy, through our owne lightnes, and wee scatter and powre out our harts more then before. What shall wee say of our frailties, but that euery thing being well examined, we finde, that wee doe nothing right, and that it were much reason, that we should rather be confounded, by considering how faultily it is performed, then that once it should passe by the least parte of our thoughts, that we had done any thing which were worth the looking on.

It is certaine, that if a Page serue a king, and that he make him not due reuerence, they will punish him. If he answere not, or doe it not soone enough, or giue not a quicke account of any message, they will alsoe punish him. And in fine they whome we serue are not contented, though we doe what they bidd vs,

but

but withall we must doe it well, if we meane not to be reprehended and reproached.

And tell mee now my freind, which of vs is he, who carryes such a profound reuerence to our Lord as is fitt? where is that adoration of such an incomprehensible Maiesty, and such a profound internall kind of trembling, as they haue in heauen, of whome it is said in the holy Masse, *That the Powers tremble*? Where is that confusion and shame; which we should haue, to appeare before that infinite wisdom, which welldoth see what kind of things we are, & which discouers vs to the very bottome? where is that soe exact obedience, as that we should not neede to haue the same thing commaunded twice? where is that discretio, where-with we ought to serue such a thing as God? where is the gratitude which is due for soe innumerable and soe vnspeakeable benefitts? And lastly where is that seruice both of body and soule, which is deserued by soe high a lord, and soe great a God?

Certainely hee who hath eyes to see, will neuer discouer in himselfe any thing els, but a profundity of miseries and faultes. And when in the euening hee takes account of himselfe, what kind of man he hath beene all that day, he findes nothing, but errors which he hath committed, in thinking, speaking, and doeing, and he findes diuers good workes which hee hath failed to doe, by not hauing loued and being thankfull to God, and by not

hauing loued and not hauing supported the weakenes of his neighbour as he ought to haue done, besides innumerable other things, which he should haue performed, and hath omitted. And if with the fauour of our Lord, he haue done any thing which was good; he findes that hee spotted it with pride, or vaine glory, or tepidity, or with not answering God as he was bound to doe, or with two thousand other faulces which God makes him know, and with two thousand others which yet he is not able to discerne, but yet he beleives that there they are; and for soe wicked doth hee esteeme himselfe, as that the least parte of his sinnes he holds to be that, which he discouers. For as he knowes that God is more good, then he is able to conceiue, soe alsoe doth he beleieue, that himselfe is more wicked then he can auine to vnderstand. And though God doe him fauours, yet doth he not attribute to himselfe any parte thereof, but onely the faulces which he committed, in not answering, and profiting thereby, as he should haue done.)

And this is to walke according to truth, giuing that to God which is his; That is to say, all manner of good, without the least mixture of any ill. And by this consideration being rooted well in the bowels of a man's hart (as a truth which were deliuered by the very mouth of God) a man rises, from leaning vpon himselfe; as from some broken reede, and he euer goes leaning vpon him, who vphoulds all

things. He behoulds himselfe ; and hee sees nothing ; but that which is to be lamented ; and he behoulds God ; in whose goodnes he confides ; without any feare to be forsaken. And forasmuch as God is soe faithfull, as that he neuer leaues them whoe goe to him ; and for that he hath soe great care of them ; as that infinitely sooner, there will be want of water in the Sea, and of light in the sunne, then of mercy in him ; therefore doe they runne , and fly, because God carryes them , and they falle not ; because he sustaines them ; and they wander not, because he directs them , and they shall not be condemned , because our Lord giues his kingdome to such as *become like little children.*

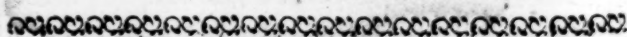
Bee therefore sure , my freind ; that thou vnderstand thy selfe right, since our Lord doth soe much expect it of thee. And of all that which passes in thee , lay the glory aside for God , and take the shame and dishonour to thy selfe. And place thy hope, of being able to proceede, as thou hast begun , in that Lord who put thee in the way ; with noe meaning, I assure thee, to leaue thee in the midst thereof, but to carry thee on , to enioy the society of his spouses in heauen. There doeth he intend to doe thee extraordinary honour , and therefore procure not thou to be honoured heere. For being taken by the set of such an excellēt feast as that , it is vtterly against all reason, that thou shouldst glut thy selfe, with the basenes of any thing, which this world affoordes. For there is

nothing vpon earth, which can fauour well in his mouth, who hath tasted, though but a litle, of that celestiall foode. Turne thy backe to all things, which thou art soone to leaue, & place not thy hart on that, which is soe instantly to passe away. It is very litle, which heere thou art able to endure for God, yea though thou alone shouldest endure all that, which can be endured heere. For considering hell, which thou hast deserued, and heauen with which he meanes thou shalt be rewarded (since he hath placed thee in the way thither) and againe, waighing that which heere he hath endured for thee; it is not to be accounted of, noe nor so much as to be greatly considered, which thou either doest, or mayest endure for him.

Esteeme thou God for soe pretious a thing, that whatsoever he growes to cost thee, thou maiest still beleeue it to bee very little; yea though he cost thee thy life, yet doest thou buy him very cheape. In the next world, thou shalt see, that thou wert not deceiued, in the exchange which thou hast made, but finding them to be treated like madd fooles, and miserable persons, who lodged their harts, and be-sotted themselues, vpon this present world, and forgot the promises which God made concerning the future, thou wilt giue praises to our Lord, in that thou being once deceiued, he vouchsafed to vndeceiue thee, and whilest thou wert casting thine eyes downe to earth, he was pleased to raise them vp to hea-

uen; and thou being a slaue to vanity, hee made thee a sonne of his owne; and when thou wert liuing without any hope of diuine promises, he grew to place thee in that way, wherein thou maiest hope, that he will helpe thee now to liue well, and afterwards to dye well. And that when this exile is ended; he will conduct thee *to the land of the liuing*; which is the cleere fruition of the face of God. Where thou shall enioy soe great happines, that it belongs to God alone to know it perfectly, as to him alone it belongs, both to be able, and to be willing to giue it. And this will our Lord doe, not for thy sake, but for his owne, because hee is good, and his mercy endures for euer. To whome, for all, and of all, and in all, be glory and praise, for alleternities of eternities.
Amen.





A Letter of the Authour to a person, whome he exhortes to bee gratefull and carefull to preserve the giift of the Grace of God. It seemes, he was in some feare, that the partie was returning to sinne.

I Remember you often; and the loue I beare you, makes me neuer thinke of you without some feare and trembling at my hart, considering the many dāgers, wherein your soule may be, for which our Lord hath done so much, that if he were still in case to be weary, without doubt he would now be very weary. But he was weary, once for all, when he tooke our mortall flesh vpon him; and from those weary-nesses of his, doth result that care, which now without any wearinesse at all, he takes of such, as he is drawing to himselfe.

O Sir, how much reason haue you, to be gratefull for the good which you haue receiued; and carefull, at the least, to keepe it; and fearefull, least it should slippe out of your hāds. And I sayd *Carefull at the least to keepe it*; because he, who can make coniecture, that he hath receiued the giift of Iustification, must employ himselfe, like a diligent negociatour; that with *fine talents* he may gayne other *fine*, Improving that good, which God beganne in his soule, and getting, euery day, a new parte in heauen;

since the gate is open, for our getting more, and more in euery minure of our life.

It is most certaine, that if we should tell a man, that there were a very long way, in the steppes whereof there were great felicity to be obtayned, yea and that, for the making of one single pace, they would giue him the worth of a whole kingdome; and that though a man should goe all his life time, in that way, they would neuer depriue him, of his rewarde, but that still it should holde on, after the rate, of the first pace, which he had made; I doe not thinke, that in the whole world there is any one worldly man, who in this case, would not be so great a walker, as that he would hardly be euer perswaded to sitt still. Now, if couetousnesse of visible things be able to worke so great effects; what will it be fit, that the loue of that, which is inuisible and eternall, should worke in our soules, but a vigilant care, to be still walking on, in the way of God, with resolutions as liuely, and more, then they were, which we entertayned the first day, when we entred into his seruice.

Who is he, that can be so absurdly inconsiderate, as not to holde himselfe a deepe debter to Almighty God, for the many gifts, which he hath receiued from him, in recompence (as I may say) of so many sinnes of ours, as that he will not serue so benigne a Lord, with all diligence? who is he, that considering when our Lord hath drawen him, will not resolute

Psal.
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to be daily further and further of from hell, and from the impiety of sinne? He seemes not to haue bene sorrie for his offence, who procures not with diligence to be farre from the like. He doth not sufficiently thanke our Lord for this guift; who hath layde aside the memory thereof, & with whome it decayes with time; not stirring himself vp, to giue new thanks, and to presente new seruices, knowing more and more thereof, euery day, as a person, who hath receiued encrease of light: This is so great a fauour, that Dauid calles it the *Benedictions of sweetenesse*. And it is great reason, that we should grow strong with that new grace, which our Lord gaue vs, and not content ourselues still with being little ones.

I sayd, that *at least we must be carefull in the continuance and conseruation of this guift*; because according to good reason we should be encreasers thereof daily more and more. And from hence it growes, that when I see, that the light of your soule is sett vpon by so many windes, and when I consider your weakenesse in the midst of so many, and so great, and so subtile enemyes, I finde my selfe to be all trembling ouer you, as any mother would be ouer her sonne; who aduentures not to reioyce for the good she sees him enioy, through the feare she hath, that he may chance to loose it.

Tell me, good Sir, how is it with you? are you still on foote in the presence of your God? doe you liue, in the presence of *true life*? is God

lodged in your hart? is there an vnion of loue betweene God and your soule? Or is there not perhaps, some litle drynesse or disagreement growen betweene you, which your much care of this world, and your little care to please your Lord, may haue caused? I feare to heare the answeare, which you may chance to giue; and yet I cannot content my selfe to be without hearing it. If you giue me good newes, my soule will reioyce in our Lord, and I will giue him thanks for hauing conserued, what he hath gayned. But if you tell me otherwise, I must be extremely sorry; and yet still howsoever, I must needes know it. For I will not remaine without greife, if you be subiect to any spirituall losse, or inconuenience. I hope to haue a parte of your Crowne; and I submit my selfe to beare a parte of your payne.

If there be any thing of this kinde, take heede you suffer not the wound to fester; and make no intricate knotts vpon the swathing-bands of your sinnes. Make haste to breake that quickly, which is ill tyed vp; for you can haue no leaue to diuide your self from him; who fixed himself to that *Crosse* for you with so cruell nayles. Say alowde to all things; *Depart from me; for neither am I yours, neither ought I be so much as mine owne.* Lett the thing be what it will, let the person be who it will, and let the interest be as great as it can be; no other can haue Title or iustice to carry you away, but onely *Iesus Christ*, who created you, and tooke

you for his sonne; and after you had beene a
rod: all admitted of you againe, and honoured
 you, and gaue you a new garment, and a sweate
 embracement of peace; and keepes a state of
 great repose prepared for you in heauen, if you
 will keepe his commaundements.

That man, namely, your selfe, belongs to
 this Lord of ours. Though euery man in this
 world, should putt in his claime for you; there
 is none, who hath so dearely bought you as he;
 to whome you also belong by another title. For
 what is it for God to dye for vs, but to repur-
 chase that, at an extreame rate, which was al-
 ready his, by the benefitt of *Creation*, and to
 draw vs out of hell, and againe to admit vs to
 his freindshipp? what is this, but to multiplie
 diuerse Titles to the same thing? and those so
 very great, that euery one of them, hath reason
 enough, to carry the whole man after it. *O trea-
 son of the sonnes of Adam* what is that, which
 you doe, when somewhat else preuailes in
 your hart against Iesus Christ? how are you
 able to say *No* to him, whome you are so bound
 to serue, though it were with the losse of your
 liues? Shall any small title, which any thing
 may make towards you, be able to carry you
 away, and so blinde you, as to make you for-
 gett so many and so great benedictions, as our
 Lord layes vp in heauen for you? Let the world
 departe, euen now, from our harts; since it is so
 soone to departe from our eyes? And when we
 shall see any thing therein, which flourishes, let

vs bury it vnder ground , and treade vpon it there, in the sepulcher. For by the cōsideration thereof, we shall obtaine a true relation of it, and such a one as will deliuer vs from it, and free vs, from the care of all that, which heere is sought, with such a pestilent kind of desire.

What better *weights or measure* can you desire , that so you may not be deceiued , nor be drawn to take one thing for another, then to carry it instantly to the Passion and death of Iesus Christ our Lord, who then condemned that, which the world esteemed; and to carry it also to the howe of our owne death, which conducts vs all naked, solitary, and defeated, and to be trod vpon by the feete of our seruants. And you in particular may doe well, to remember this point; since, besides the feare, which we all ought to haue of that passage, your self haue another particular reason for it; because you haue a more particular knowledge of death; for lately you wanted not, as a man may say, a finger's breadth of passing through it, to eternity.

Take heede, take heede, that you be not deceaued by those false apparances, and by those painted maskes; for they are no better then maskes, which enueagle & deceaue our soules. And if you like these shadowes so well, raise vp your hart to heauen, where the Truthes of these things are; whereof heere there is but some litle resemblance. And so you will neither conceiue any enuie against him, whome you

finde to prosper in worldly things; neither yet will you haue any great appetite, to possesse that, which in fine, you must be forced to leaue. Do not entangle your selfe with this earth, since God, hath giuen you some good hopes, and pledges, that he meanes to carry you to heauen. And those are, his most sacred death, the knowledge, and loue of the *Crucifix*, the receauing of the holy *Sacraments*, whereby in the holy Church there is giuen a pardon of our sinnes; and *the adoption of the Sonnes of God*, and consequently of *heyres*. Let him seeke for shadowes, who hath no hope to lay holde, on things of substance. Let him respect a short tyme, who hath had no taste of spirituall benedictions, which last for euer; And let him triumph, like a sott, in the prosperities of this world, who hath not felt in his hart, how delightfull a thing it is, to shed teares for hauing offended God; and how happy a man is, in relying vpon Christ our Lord, and in liuing to him. And since our Lord, hath called vs to his mercy, and hath giuen vs the knowledge of his Sonne Christ Iesus, *let vs not liue according to the flesh*; nor allowe of any counsell against this counsell, That in a thing so manifest, as it is, that we ought to seeke, and esteeme the contentment of Christ our Lord, despising the world, and all that is therein, there is no neede of taking any man's opinion; and we must not be moued by any vanities of the world, how many, and how vsuall, and how well receaued

foeuer they may be. *The world passes with the delight thereof* as S. Iohn saith; but he who will doe the will of our Lord, shall remaine for euer. Who relies vpon that which is vnstable, shall fall downe togeather with it; and he, who will adore an Idoll, shall growe like that very Idoll; but he, who loues Christ, our Lord (and that man loues him who hates the world) he indeede is wise, and worthy, and shall be exalted to sitt in that kingdome, with the same Iesus Christ our Lord, as he sittes at the right hand of his Father. It is much more worth, to be the least there, then to be the greatest heere: If therefore it delight vs to raigne let vs desire to doe so, in that eternall kingdome. I beseech Christ our Lord, to bestowe it on you.
Amen.



*A Letter of the Author to a deuoted religious Friend
of his, who animates him to, seeke God by obedien-
ce, & humility, and he teacheth, that recollection
of minde, must not be tyed to any certaine place.*

I Haue receiued your letter, and that which
I am to answere is this. You must know,
that there is not any one in this life, who can
think to liue without troubles; & that to com-
plaine of them, is to complaine of being a man,
since we were borne to beare them. And if it
seeme to you, that when you were shutt vp, you
carried your soule more recollected; you are to
cōsider on the other side, that *Obedience* in doing
those things, which displease ones self, and the
humility of performing meane offices, is noe
small fruite to the soule. And beleiue you this
truth, that the man, who is carefull to recollect
himself; and who puttes his confidence in God,
doth many tymes finde himself more recollec-
ted in streetes; and publique places, then if he
were in his *Cell*. And they who tye their deu-
otion to any particular kind of place, doe instāt-
ly loose it, when they leaue the place, yea and
many times in that very place, it failes them.
And this growes in regard they are resolu-
ed to haue it there, and stroue not to finde it in all pla-
ces, and in all those workes, to which they at-
tend by their *Obedience*; vpon this *Obedience*,
you must greatly procure to ground your self,

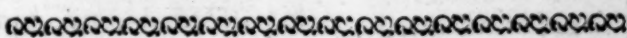
without choosing this, or that. Since Obedience is a thing soe acceptable to God, that it exceeds all that, which a man may doe vnder the conduct of his owne will, how good soeuer it may seeme. Father *Lewn of Granada* will passe shortly by you, and I would haue you doe that with great confidence, which he shall aduise you. The Holy Ghost be euer with you.

I am such an enemy of these changings of place, & I should the very desires thereof soe fit to be suspected; as that I am made slow in giuing answer to what you write concerning them; till by your prayers we may get more light to guide vs. For otherwise, we shall goe as bad as blindfould; and perhaps you may fall vpon worse encounters, then they are, which you would auoyd. I beseech you sollicite the matter with our Lord; & when I shall haue satisfied mine owne hart, I will impart it vnto you. In the meane tyme I recommend to you much, that you keepe your soule in peace. For it happens to some, that they both loose theyre tyme, and the good opportunity, which God giues them, by thinking much vpon that other, which they desire to obtaine; & soe they growe to loose, both the one, and the other.

Make you accōpt, that there is but one day of life left, for you; and that that day is the morning, when you awake. And spend you that, as if it were your last, with all the care that possibly you cā. And when the desire of doeing any other thing, occurs, make this answer,

Doe not thinke of to morrow ; and exercise your self, in breaking your will. For when a man flies from the opportunity , which he hath to breake it, it is like flying out of the feilde. And because such a one flies like a coward, and carryes his weakenes in his company ; therefore when the occasion presents it self afterward , he findes , that he is as farre from strength , as before ; the reason heereof is , because he changed his place, but not his minde: giue you a good accompt of that house, and of the opportunity , which there you haue ; and soe you shall gett a tongue, where-with you may aske a better , at the hands of our Lord ; For otherwise they may say vnto you, that he who conducts ill that which he hath already in his care, to what end should one trust a greater matter, in his hands ?





*A Letter of the Author to a deuout
Lady, animating her to fight
against the Deuill, and to
resist his temptations.*

I Beseech our Lord, that you may find your self as I desire; for it was not said in vayne, *that loue is full of a carefull kind of feare*. But in fine, I haue confidence, that our Lord (as he saith to vs by the Prophet Ieremy) will regard that loue wherwith he espoused himself in those beginnings of his, and will remember how the people followed him, without any high way in the Desart; which was full of affliction to them, and carryed a kind of resemblance of death. God is very thankfull, to such as serue him with loue; and in the tyme of our weakenesses, and when our strength is euen vpon the point to faile, then doth he looke backe, vpon the time when formerly wee had beene in vigour, and to that amorous intention, which wee had in former time, relieuing our misery, with the abundance of his mercy. Continue therefore with a harte full of courage; and, as S. Paule saith; *doe not loose your confidence; for there belongs a great reward to it* And this is that, which the Deuill would

Heb. 10

Judges.
9.

faine, either take away from vs, or weaken in vs, so to pull vs downe, who pull him downe, and much more, you, being a woeman; by whose hand he would esteeme it, more dishonour, to be ouercome. As Abimelech sayd to his second, *doe thou kill mee*; that soe it may not be sayd, that a woeman killed mee; for a woeman had cast a peece of earth stifly downe vpon him from the fortresse. Thus must you doe, when the Deuill shall offer you combate. Cast Christ our lord at him; and soe breake his head (for Christ our lord being man, is called *earth*); and soe the enemy shall dye. And if notwithstanding, it seeme to you, that still he must be a liue; knowe yet, that he remaynes in extreme trouble, and euen as dead, to see himself ouercome, and to be the occasion that you shall gayne crownes, whereas he thought that they would haue proued fetters.

To what greater misery can an enemy be subiect, then to see, that he helps him, to be great, in the eyes of God. For if you sawe the treasure, which you haue gayned, by resisting the Deuill, soe very often; there is noe doubt, but that it would sufficiently temper the bitterness of your troubles to consider the beawty and riches of those crownes. Now so many pretious stones haue you gotten, wherewith to enrich your crowne, as you haue resisted, times, those counsailes of the Deuill; and so much haue you gained of eternall rest, as you haue with patience, endured seuerall times, the sadd afflictions, which he hath brought vpon you. Be

not therefore weary, of getting still new pretious stones, though whilst they are throwne at you, they hurt you a little; but then instantly after, they are your owne.

And see that you resist that vnprofitable sadnesse, which is the beginning of many mischiefes; & confiding in our lord, and being cheerefull in the hope of his loue, tread all vnder foot; and let it seeme little to you, as S. Bernard saith, *My affliction is hardly to bee counted affliction for one halfe houre, and if it proue any longer I sele it not, through the force of my loue.* Tread you vpon the dragon, and vpon the lyon, and let him feare you, and not you him. And say you to your self. *Our lord is my helper, and whome them shall I feare? Our Lord takes care of mee, what then can arrine, which may afflict mee? Our lord gouernes mee, and I am safe Our lord serues himself of mee, and I aspire to no other happines, how much soeuer it may cost mee.* And thus, the Deuill finding you full of courage, and well armed, shall not bee able to pull you downe, but rather feare, soe much as to assault you. Our lord, who called you, conserue you, and make you such, as I beseech him that you may bee. Amen.

Psal. 26.



*A Letter of the Autboure to a Cauallier
his freind.*

TH E newes of this messenger , who is parting , takes me by night , and without paper , and full of my ordinary indispositions. I beseech our lord , who is omnipotent , to tell you that by himselfe ; which he was to haue tould you by my penne ; since in me there is noe ability to doe it , nor haue I indeede any opportunity. The cōplaintes you make against your selfe , vpon the opinion which you had of your owne prudence , are iust. You must admitt them , & doe them iustice ; euer esteeming that opinion for a crafty enemye , and counting vp euery pace it makes , that soe you may vnderstand the deceites thereof. For in these temptations , to know them , is to ouercome them. Make that very account with your selfe , which was made by that Monke , in this namer ; *I came not to iudge any , but to be iudged by all.* Say thus to your selfe ; *I came not to haue zeale of others but of my selfe. God places not me in the office of a guide , but in the duty of being guided.* And who is soe maddly impertinent , as that hee will thinke to hitt right , in that , where God puttes him not ; since euery plantation which is not made by the heauenly father , shall be rooted vp.

But now, if by *Obedience* you be commaunded to deliuer your minde, first begg you light of our lord, and then declare it, but not without feare, and as a thing which you doe but offer, to the end that it may be examined by others. And you are not to shoot it out, with such a kind of resolution, and auctority, as if it must needs be approued, and executed, because forsooth you thought it fitt. Noe nor that it ought to haue any force att all, ypon that reason; but onely, that things may soe be done, as others may take to be most cōuenient, whether they approue or disallow your opinion. And you must conceiue, that by doing thus, you comply with the duty of your *Obedience*, and that you haue nothing more to doe in that busines.

They, who either be endwed with light from heauen, or haue else beene taught to see, by the many falles, which they haue taken; doe noe lesse feare, euen some good desires of particular thinges, then the executing of some desires, which are not good. Yea, and in some sorte, they apprehend them more because of the two, it is harder to vnderstand and maister the deceit, which lurkes in them. Now this *feare*, takes order that they runne not instantly to entertaine them, but to keepe their stand; recommending that desire of theirs to our lord, and asking counsell of him. This *feare* is the beginning of *wisedome*, and it is alsoe the end thereof. It is hard to declare this point by let-

ter but for him who hath a superiour, whome he obeyes, it is easily declared, by putting the case, and following his counsell.

When you shall be come to know, that such a busines concernes the seruice of God, and that it is fitt to be dispatched, yet still euen that must be done in such sorte, as that his Ma-iesty be not offended, for whose seruice the busines it to be vndertaken. For if the heart be thereby filled, with cares and distractions, and especially if they come at wrong tymes, the thing it selfe may well be iust, but the manner of doing it, wil not be soe. It is a good thing, for a man to cary himselfe like a persone who is at the comaund of another; and not as a guide of the busines. Not as if you were some great maister, but rather like some young fellow, who were bidden, eyther to come, or goe when the care of any particular shall put it selfe vnseasonably vpon you; say to it, to this effect, *Our lord commaundes me nothing, about that matter at this time; For my part, I haue nothing to thinke; all will goe into error, if it be done after my fancye when our lord shall commaund me to doe it, I will doe it, and I will both heare, and speake.* For this purpose it is good to sett but some determinate time, to thinke of these thinges, which require care; that soe they may not come vpon a man, in troupes, when he were to be in silence with God. If they bring any affliction with them, which much disquiet; we may well conceiue that that is not the way, wherein God walkes:

nor doe we comply with his word, which saith, *Nolite solliciti esse, labor enim exercendus, sollicitudo tollenda*: you must not be ouer carefull, for paines must be taken but sollicitude is forbidden; and for the taking of it away, our lord willes vs to confide in our heauenly Father.

He who hath this confidence, perceiues well, that the busines dependes vpon God; and that his diuine wisdome, knowes how to addresse him, and therefore a Christian man, is to be perswaded, that it giues noe aduantage, euen to the very busines it selfe, if we fall into any vnquiet kinde of anguish; or euen to superfluity of thinking of it, which is thus forbidden, by holy scripture. *Ne affligas te metipsum in consilio tuo*: Doe not afflict thy selfe in thine owne counsell: but say thus to your selfe, *It is God who must doe it, and not I*. Perhaps our lord will not haue it remedied by this meanes. And if he will, yet his will alsoe is that it be done with peace, and with my spirituall gaine, and without my losse. And soe procure, that your heart may euer goe, in celebration of that. *Christian Sabaoth*, whereof S. Paul speaketh; and then we may say to our lord, *Descend thou into my heart, for it is all free for thee: and it hath nothing which may distract me from hearing thee, and from speaking to thee*. You haue reason to desire the helpe of prayers to this purpose: for it is not soe easily obtained. I beseech our lord, who called you to his owne seruice, continue you in his grace, and carry you afterwarde, with himselfe to eternall rest.

A Letter of the Authour to a Virgin who lived in Recollection. Of the vaelew of a soule, and the care wherwith it is to be kept from falling. And that if it fall, it must haue hope, and soe rise againe.

I Know not with what wordes, I may be able to expresse the fault which accuses mee, and the punishment which I feare. I looke back vpon the much time which hath passed without writing to you, whilst yet you were recommended to me; that soe by meanes of my care, you might proceede and profit, in the seruice of our heauenly king; since he was pleased to receaue you for his, through that word, which I preached vnto you. And I in the meane time, like an ill seruant of Christ our Lord, haue beene negligent in negotiating this businesse which he held to be soe truly his; as that it filled him full of care, and soe full, as to make him giue his life, for the dispatch thereof. And not onely haue I sinned against him, but against you alsoe. To him I haue beene an ill seruant, and to you I haue beene an ill Father, since I haue not preserued the stock nor sustained you with the food of his word; his, who made mee his steward, to the end, that in the true time, I might wisely and faithfully dispence it, to euery one, according to that which he should neede.

1. Cor. 4

Lnc. 12

I am much greiued for my negligence, as it

becomes a guilty person; and I apprehend the punishment of my fault. Not that I feare soe much, least our Lord should punish, or scourge, or afflict me for it, with vexations, and torments, as that, he may permitt your soule to receiue some disaduantage thereby. For when a man hath noe knowledge of what belongs to children, nor cares how he may bring them vpp; it is but reason both that he see them dye, and that they may alsoe continue dead in his sight; that soe the greife thereof, may bee a torment to him, & may keepe those eyes open, which his carelesnes had shutt.

My good sister, (for I will presume to say, that you are *mine*, because you are the *Spouse* of my Lord) O how happy were he, who might know how it is with you; that soe he might either be delighted in your good, or receiue the torment of sorrow, for your *ill*: how happy were he, who might know, if those feruent teares of yours still continue, which washed your soule in the high presence of your *Spouse*, and which watered it with deuotion, that soe it might giue fruit to the Lord thereof. And if your long watches last, wherein you were wont to treate in secrecy and solitude with him, whom your soule loues. Reflecting vpon those sorrowes, which he endured for loue of you; and, you, desiring to endure somewhat like that, for the loue of him.

I beseech him of his mercy, that you may not haue lost that holy silence of yours, which

was discourse with God ; your rich pouerty, which gaue you more full satisfaction, then all the wealth of this world; That cōtempt of your selfe, which gaue you price & vlew in the sight of our Lord, and that holy change of your life, which cast them into wonder, who saw you, & praised God in you. Let it not please him, that mine eares may euer heare, that the seruant of Christ, is other then shee vsed to bee. Let it neuer come to passe, that shee should liue with any other, nor regard any other, nor thinke of any other, then onely Christ our Lord; to whome shee offered her selfe. Make noe exchange; whereby, you may bee soe deceiued; as that hauing tasted of that heauenly guift, & hauing fed vpon the crūmes of the table of God; you should now afterward, come to tast the bitternes of Egypt; & those meate which are deuoured by mē cast of from him. Who when heere, they shall haue satisfied themselues *with the foode of swine*, shall burne heereafter, in the cōpany of deuills.

Seruant of Iesus Christ, how is it with you indeed? tel me, how it is with you. I beseech Iesus, you bee wel in his sight. S. *Paule* said, that euen his very life, consisted in the good of his children; and euen I, though not with that great fire, but with the little, which God giues mee, doe yet aduēture to say, that my life consists, in that you be well, in the sight of God. I can take noe pleasure in this body, if the soule of my daughter, be dead; nor shall delight haue any place in me, til I may know, that your *Sponse*, whome I lodged in you, doth still inhabite

your hart. If it be any otherwife, it is I, who haue made the fault, & I will performe the pēnāce; but yet see that you bee not angry with him.

Doe not my good Sister, afflict me more then already I am afflicted, through mine owne fault, by the loue, which I carry to your soule; and if you bee offended with my negligēce, be appeased by this cōfession which is full of shame and greife. And beleue that through the fauour of our Lord, you shall wel finde, that I wil mend. And vpon this motiue, you must forget that I haue beene an ill Father to you; since vpon the same, God forgets that we haue been ill sonnes & ill seruāts to him. And if yet you will require further satisfactiō, be your owne caruer; and require of me what you will. Onely retourne to the way of God, if you should haue left it, or els make mee know, that you continue in it; that so I may be sure that thinges goe wel with you; & that I may haue strēgth to beare that pēnāce which you shall impose vpon me for my negligēce. *Negligence*, I meane in writing to you; but not in remembering you. For in this our Lord, hath not permitted that I should be forgetfull. For soe great was the loue, which I carryed towards you, vpon seeing that you were growne to be the true seruant of God; and you entred soe deeply into my hart, when I considered those mer-eyes, which our Lord had vouchsafed to you; that it neuer parted more from thence, though it haue failed, to strengthen and comfort you in this way as it should haue done.

Pardon me my good Sister for the loue of *Iesus* Christ; and bee not cruel against yourselfe, but be as cruell against me, as you shall thinke fit. Be sure to loue our Lord, for he deserues not to be ill vsed, for the

negligence of his seruant. And if you should haue forgotten your duety to him you know his condition already well enough, and, that he hath promised to receiue the soule which will retourne and that if you will forgiue me he wil pardon you. And he will shew you such mercyes, as he shewed before, and wil enable you to sing those Canticles to him, which you sung in your first beginning, and birth, to Christ our Lord.

Doe not now giue cause of ioy, to those infernal spirits, since there was a time, wherein you wounded them with sorrow. Doe not greiue your good Angel, since he hath giuen God much praise for you; and hath reioyced at your *vocation*. Doe not reuerse that solemne Festiuitie, which was celebrated in the kingdome of heauen, vpon the day of your cōuersion. And if through my sinnes any of these things should haue happened, yet still you must not be dismayed. For our Lord will stretch forth his armes, and will receiue you; since he stretched them out for you vpon the *Crosse*. And it is vsual with him, to loue that person more, who hauing runn away out of the warr doth yet returne to fight with greater courage, then that other, who though he neuer forsook the feild, yet was neuer but slack in doeing him seruice.

This is a kind of warr, wherein the losse of the victory consists not in the not receiuing any woundes, but in flying out of the battaille, & rendring himselfe to the enemye, in the quality

of a man who is overcome. Take courage, and begin yet once againe, for you shall find Christ our Lord close at hand to help you. And seeing your humility, and how much you are ashamed of your selfe, he will not put you to confusion. Nor when he shall perceiue, that you are lying prostrate at his feete, will he cast you off, or kick you out of his sight. And if you call vpon those intercessours, of yours, who are in heauen, they will not make themselues deafe to the cries which you send vp from hence, As for me because I haue made the fault, whereby you haue incurred the inconuenience, if there be any, I wil alsoe performe the pennance as I said before. And I wil beseech our Lord to restore and raise that vp, which my negligence made fit for ruine. Let all your thoughts beate vpon his hauing begunn the worke, and not vpon my hauing neglected it. And then he will put things in good order, because he is the true louer. of soules, and pretends not to see mens sinnes, that soe they may retract them by sorrow. I beseech him euen by what himself is, that he wil keep you in close protection, vnder his wings; and make you gracious in his sight, and that he wil punish me in whatsoeuer sort he shal thinke fit. And I beg of you by him that you wil write to me, though I confesse my selfe to be vnworthy of your answere.


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*A letter of the Authour, to a woman, who was afflicted with grievous, and dangerous temptations. He encourages her to suffer, and shewes that the fruit of afflictions is great, when they are well borne.*

*Esaie.*  
 40.

**B**E E comforted, bee comforted, O you my people, sayth the lord your God: *speake to the hart of Ierusalem, and call her hither; for her punishment is ended, and her sinne is pardoned.* Confide, my good sister: for these words are spoaken to you, and they commaunde you to be comforted, through his fauour, who will defende you: though your owne infirmities, and those infernall powers, strue to plucke you downe. But if they, be carefull to persecute you: more carefull is Christ our lord, to ouersadow you, and to defende you, and to fetch you of from this combatt, adorned with new Crownes, which are incomparably more to be esteemed and reioyced in, then your tribulation deserues to be lamented.

What is the matter? what is that, which afflicts you? what is that which frights you? your God is the curer of these wounds: be not troubled there at. For at the instant that he closes them, he will shine to you as a sunne, seauen times more bright, then before you were subiect

to this affliction, your spirituall prosperities, will incomparably excell, those which are past : since that which you suffer now, doth so farre exceede in bitterness that which formerly you suffered. For these flowds of anguish, vse to serue but for a preface, to an aboundance of spirituall delight as the tribulations of *Iob* were messengers to him, of a doubling of his estate and comfort, which God bestowed vpon him. God afflicted him first, and then he comforted him, he tryed him, and then he crowned him : he hid himself from him a litle : but afterwards he shewed himselfe more deare, and sweeter, then he had seemed before to be offended.

*Iob 24.*

This is the stile, which our lord holdes with his seruants. He mortifies them so farre, that he seemes, as if he would place them, in the verie torments of hell : but then instantiy againe he drawes them out, and putts them into perfect ease : and so, as that the *whale* is neither able to retaine him, nor yet so much as to touch him with anie offence, whome she had swallowed. Our aduersaries, the deuills, are full of pride, and they threaten, to deuoure vs : but let vs say to them, in their teeth : *Come and spare not, for you shall be overcome. Take what counsell you list, it shall come to nothing, for God is on our side.* Let it not, my good sister, passe once so much as in your thought, to be afrayd of these infernall wolues: For hee, who conquered them once vpon the *Crosse*, hath conquered them in you:

*Jonas 2.*

E. Iaye  
19.

and will do so againe; and will despoyle them, to their great shame. And how soeuer it may seeme to you, that the encounter is fierce, and the enemy so strong, as to fright you; be not yet dismayde. For it is our lord who sayth: *Shall perhaps the prize be taken out of the hand of the strong man? And shall that, which was seised by the mightie, be resumed?* Most certainly the captiue shall be taken out of the hand of the *strong man*; and that shall be rescued, which he had taken by violence. And this shall come to passe; because the hand of God, will fight for you; and will ouershadow you, as birds with their wings spread abroad, defende and couer those yong ones of theirs, which they loue so much.

O that our eyes could once but see, that zeale of God, wherewith he keepes our soules, and how safely he claspes them in his hand, euen when they thinke, that they are already lost. Some are wont to throw downe a glasse, with speede, to shew, how dexterously they can receaue a bricke thing in safetie, which is cast, though neuer so speedily, from on high. And if the glasse could feeble and knowe, it would tremble to see it self cast downe so farre and so fast, and to be falling towards hard stones, where it were likelie to be broken, into a hundred pieces. But then comes to succour it, the other hand of him, who threw it downe; and so it is receaued without any hurt at all. And thus you who see your self so drawen euen out of yourself,

and

assaulted with such sharpe fyres, and afflicted by so fierce paynes, doe tremble and feare, conceiuing that you shall be broken all to pieces, by falling into offences against our lord. But you must knowe and consider, that our lord, who hath brought you into this trouble, he himself will bring you out: and he, who hides himself a while from you, that you may suffer, is yet very neare you for your defence. For otherwise, you had bene swallowed vp ten thousand times ouer, by your enemies. He throwes you downe, and yet he receaues and saues you from falling. He moues the tempest, but yet he it is, who keepes you from drowning. For in that, which you feelee, it is not you, who doe any thing, but you suffer it. He who doth it, is the deuill, and he shall pay for it.

God sees your hart perfectly well, and that you are a louer of his Commaundements, and one, who abhorres any thing, which is offensive to him. I beseech him to keepe you, as he hath done hitherto, for as for those things, which the deuill representes to your minde, be not troubled at all thereat. For though it be full of deformitie, and afflict you much, yet you will not be the worse for that. These are things, which happen to manie, and not only these, to which you are subiect, but others also which are incomparably greater, and which seeme indeede, to be a verie copie of the true hell, and of that language, which there they holde.

But not for all this, doth God forsake his

soules ; but euen when all humaine counsell, and power failes, then runnes he towards them: with a mightie hand, taking away the cuppe of bitternesse, euen from their mouthes, and in exchange thereof, he giues them ten thousand comforts. And, the while, a man comes to know, that he is weake, by hauing vnderstood his great miserie through experience. He knowes also, the strength, and malice of his enemies, and procures to fly from them, and leanes closer vpon God, whome he findes to be onely able to deliuer him, out of such bitter pangs as those. And thus, out of his former miseries, he both fetches light, whereby he may esteeme lesse of himself: and repose greater confidence in God; and he learnes to liue with greater caution, and reseruatiō, hauing discovered the treacheries and malicious proceeding of the deuill. And we are not to account little of this benefitt: because as our true life consistes in knowing, and louing Almighty God: so also is it a thing of great moment, if in the strength and vertue of good spirituall directions we may haue some knowledge of the deuilles wayes. Not to the ende, that we may loue, and honour him, ( for that belongs from vs to God ) but that we may fly from him, and escape from his snares; which are discerned, and knowen by few men, who yet conceaue, that they haue some knowledge of God. Nay, therefore we are to make great account of the fruit, which we gather out of these



difficulties : because thus the soule growes to gayne experience, in the warre, against this subtil enemy. And these things, and manie others, doth our merciefull lord, draw out of these hard encounters, whereby our aduersarie pretendes to make vs fall. And so we make him loose, that which he hoped to gaine, and we putt a scorne vpon him: whilst we profitt, and purifye our soules, by that verie meanes, which he vsed, for the disadvantage thereof.

And forasmuch, as you haue offered your self, to the seruice of Christ our lord : and are now no longer your owne, since the day, wherein you were made so happie; doe not cōceiue, that this pastour of your soule, is liable to the fault of being forgettfull. For if he would forgett you, he would not call you, nor courte you, nor passe so sweete promises to you. In the day of aduersitie, let your minde looke back to the day of prosperitie, which formerly you enioyed : that so your present condition, may not draw you downe, when it is tempered, with the memorie of those fauours, which were imparted so you in time past. And be sure that if Christ did not loue you, he would not haue raysed you vp, nor giuen you that Iewell. And since you know, that you beganne to walke in this way for his sake : and that you haue desired to please him : and that, according to your frailtie, you haue procured to do it: lay not such a spott vpon your honour, as to fayle of confidence in him, from whom,

Eccl.  
11.



when you remayned in separation, he drew you close to himself; & conueyed a sweet, & meeke spiritt into the bowells of your hart; and sett you out, with his owne marke; to the ende that both you might be his, and that you might know your self for such.

And now, if the infernall wolfe, haue presumed to sett vpon her, who was sett forth by the marke of *Iesus Christ* and who desired to serue him, doe not wonder at it; for these are the tryalls of our *Faith*, and *loue*; to see if we will be dismayed, and so turne back. There is no true vertue, vnlesse it be tryed; and the tryalls of *Faith* are dangers, and discountenances of God. But euen then, if that faith be pure, and fine, not onely it is not dismayed, but how much the more it is vexed, so much the more strength it takes, and euen fetches society out of solitude. For we know, that it is the custome of our Lord, to place his seruants, euen vpon the very hornes of the bull, and to hide himself, when he hath done, to try their faith. And forasmuch as their sight, is onely bent vpon the goodnesse of our Lord; they care not for what they feele, nor from what quarter the winde comes; but a confidence is engendred thereby, that as the anker of a shipp at sea, doth fixe it self to the earth; so will a faithfull soule, lay fast holde, vpon the Crucifix, and fixe his thought, and say; *Thou, o Lord, dyedst for me, before I was borne; and thou soughtst me with the sorrow of thy hart, when I sought thee not nor desired*

thy ayde; but now I call vpon thee, and I loue thee; and therefore now forsake me not. If thou diddest receaue, and shelter him, who was thine enemy; thou wilt neuer driue him away, who desires to serue thee; and whome thou hast accepted for thine owne. And in this faith, you must liue, and remaine secure amongst, all the waues, and tempests, which the sea can shew; though it may seeme to you, that the shipp is euen sinking; and you must labour, that so your hart may not fayle: least else our Lord awake, and chide you, as he did his Apostles, saying: Why feare you, o men of little faith? whereby you may see, how much in earnest our Lord is, when he requires vs to be full of courage: since euen, when the waues are entering into the little shipp to swallow it vp, euen then did he reproach them, because they feared. And this he doth, because he will not allow them to be afrayde at all, who embarke themselves with him. For they goe with the true Lord of soules; who is our faithfull helper out of the greatest straytes.

Math.  
8.

And now, since you are one of them, who haue quitt the shore, and embarked yourself with him, by entering vpon his seruice: what can that be, which you should feare: since you haue walked, and doe so still, in company of Iesus Christ our Lord. Remember, that S. Peter, whilst he had faith went treading with his feete vpon the waters; but as soone, as he saw the winde stiffe, and the waues high, he feared, and then presently beganne to sinke. To giue

Math.  
14.

vs to vnderstand, that with a *faith*, which was firme, he went secure: and by growing tepide, he began to be drowned, and heard this word from the mouth of our Lord: *O thou man of little faith, why didst thou doubt?* And in the same manner doth he say to vs, if he see vs fearefull of any visible danger whatsoeuer.

And if our Lord tooke such care to deliuer his disciple from a corporall death: much more will he take care, to free you from the death of your soule: and to secure you, that the tempest, which is risen against you, may not drown you. Onely be you sure, my good sister, that you be not dismayed, and forsake not the warfare: for heere the Crowne is lost, not because men are tempted, but because they either flye, or be ouercome. Offer your selfe to suffer paine, and euen fire, for his honour, who suffered so much for you. And by how much the greater your afflictions are, esteeme them for so much the more certaine token, of the loue, which passes betweene Christ our Lord, and you. Beseech him, that he will strengthen you, towards sufferance, and not that he will take away your afflictions. For it will be a Purgatorie to you, whereby you may be wholly purified, in the sight of God, and the *Crosse* of your beloued lord will keepe you companie. This *Crosse* is that thing, which all the louers of our Lord desire, and by meanes thereof, you will remaine like goulde, in the Crucible; so much or the more resplendent, as you were more afflicted.

Consider, that euerie loue, is to endure somewhat, which may declare himself, for the loue of his beloued. And since you are entred into the warre of Loue, do not turne coward; but consider, how great things, euen weake woemen haue endured for Christ our Lord. Some by fire, others by scourges, and others by hauing had their flesh torne from their bones; and they held themselues happy in suffering for the loue of their Lord.

Now you also suffer for him. For if you would forsake him, your enemies would not persecute you; but you are passed ouer to Iosue's side, and therefore doe they moue this warre against you. And if amongst men, there be want of base, and bloudie executioners, the deuills come, in their place, who are both more cruell, & are not so soone wearie, as the other; and with grates of iron they torment you; and more in the soule, then in the bodie; and you are to esteeme, that you are in martyrdome for the loue of Christ our Lord, since you are martyrizd for his seruice.

Iosue  
10.

Do not omitt your deuotions of Confession, and Communicating, though you should doe it without any great sensible appetite, and though the deuill should seeke to hinder it, as he is wont to doe, so farre as to strike your tongue dumbe, so that you cannot Confesse your sinnes, as likewise he giues you to beleiue, that you haue eaten, at such a tyme in the night, that so you may not Communicate the mor-

ning after. Treade that enemie of yours vnder-foote, with all his craft: and pray to our Lord, vpon the *Crosse*; and take that *Crosse* in your companie; and arme your self therewith; and offer your self so truly to anie state of sufferance, that if our Lord were pleased, that it should last vpon you all your life, you would yet be content therewith. And how much the deeper you shall cast your self into his will, so much the more speedily, will he relieue you. For he driues not them from him, who strue towards him.

And remember, that there is no *lone* without *griefe*; and *that we are to enter, into the kingdome of heauen by many tribulations*. Where, for one onely houre that you may see God in his beauty: you would thinke two thousand yeares of that sufferance, to which now you are subiect, to be well employed. And since God is to carrie you thither, as you haue reason to hope he will; be not cowardlie in *suffering* nor repide in *loosing*; For he, who dyed for you, and called you to himself, will not forsake you. I beseech him to be your comfort. Amen.





*A Letter of the Author to a person, who was much  
 as sicted, for seeing that he profited so little in vertue  
 Hee teaches the difference, betweene self-loue, &  
 the loue of God; and how he is to doe all things,  
 for the loue of God, and nothing in conformity  
 with self-loue.*

**T**HE peace of our lord *Iesus* Christ remayne  
 with you. The roote of all our misery, is *self-  
 loue*; as on the other side, the *loue of God*, is the  
 roote of all our felicity; and so, as that he whoe  
 loues God, meets with nothing, which he can  
 properly be said to *suffer*; (because he seekes no-  
 thing but the will of God, and therein alone  
 doth he delight) soe he whoe *loues himself*, finds  
 all things to bee to hard, and to heauy, for him,  
 and he is euer tormented, with the variety, and  
 trouble of accidents. True repose doth not con-  
 sist in any thing, but in desiring little for the loue  
 of God, or rather noe one thing: and to content  
 himself, with any thing for his sake: to whome  
 wee offer, and present, as much, as wee forbear  
 to desire, for the loue of him. And if God will  
 vouchsafe, to open our eyes, that so, with *Dauid*  
*wee may consider the wonderfull things of his lawe*,  
 wee shal finde, that not onely there is danger  
 hanging ouer vs, through this *self loue*, in those  
 things which are playnely and grossely visible,  
 and exteriour: but more, and much more, euen

*Psal.*  
 118.



in those other things, wherein, many thinke: that true sanctity doth consist. And if you aske mee, what those things are, I say that they are noe other, then *vertues; the peace of soule; the kingdome of heauen; yea and euen our lord himself.* And thus you may see, how great our daunger is; since there is daunger, euen in that, which is security, and how great the mischeif is of *proper, and inordinate loue;* since the sting thereof, thrustes it self, into such holy things. Not that it is able to make them ill, ( for that it cannot doe ) but in regard that by causing vs to desire good things, as our owne last end, and for loue of our selues, wee make our selues ill; since wee inuert that order, which the *loue of God* prescribes; which is, to loue that, which is good, and our selues withall, for the seruice of God, and for his loue, and all this in the same manner, and with the same measure, which is best pleasing to his, Diuine Maiesty.

The loue of God doth not consist ( what soeuer we will needes be saying ) in the desire of much vertue, noe nor euen of God himself, if it be inordinately done, and with excesse of affliction, as wee are wont to desire other things. For if I be moued for *the loue of God*, to desire any thing, my maine desire, to haue that thing, must bee to haue it, if God will; and how, and when, and to what proportion he will, and not to bee greedy of it for my owne good, but to the end, that the will of God may bee accomplished though his pleasure were, that my soule should remayne

without vertue, and that I should neuer enter into heauen. I say though his pleasure should be so, for indeede it is not. But, at the least, our will must soe be lodged, in the will of God; as that it may bee prepared, to *will* any thing, which God *would* haue vs *will*, without any manner of exception. For if our owne *self-loue* bee alieue in vs, that mischeif is so much the wors, and more *inward*, by how much the better the thing is, which wee desire. For, in these things, as seeming to bee very safe, a man is wont to extend his appetite as farre as he lists. And whilest wee say, that wee desire *the loue of God*, wee are full of *self-loue* which makes vs desire him, for the *loue of our selues*, without any rule or measure; whereas, it ought to bee, iust the contrary.

I remember some Doctours tell mee, that *Lucifer* was the first, whoe committed this sinne; and how the thing which he desired, was good namely *felicity*, but that he desired it not how, nor when, nor in whome, nor for whome, it was fitt that he should haue desired it, but with an vnbridled appetite, which aymed at his owne priuate good, as any couetous wretch, might desire much pelfe, or any ambitious man much honour. Certainly, if the ends and rootes of our desiring one and the same thing be different, the thing it self which is materialy desired, falles out after a sorte not to be the same. But rather (as I sayd before) the better the thing it self is, the more daungerous is the inordinate desire

thereof. For there is nothing worse, then for a man to desire any thing, as his owne *last end*, for the loue of himself. This *last end* is that *soveraigne Good of Goods*, which is God, whoe ought to bee the ayme, and end of all our desires. And now, if any should say ( by not vnderstanding well, what I affirme ) that I seeme to teach, that wee must not be feruent, in desiring to become more, and more vertuous; but that wee must as well leaue all to God, which belong to the soule, as that which concernes the body: my answer is. That as in these exterior things, wee must bee diligent, but not afflict our selues with excesse of care, and anguish, but must putt our selues wholly, into the hands of God, and take with patience whatsoeuer comes: so in those things, which importe the soule, wee must be sure, to be more diligent: but yet with condition, that if notwithstanding our diligence, wee cannot haue all wee would, wee must not suffer our selues to growe impatient. For that would be a worse fault, then the former, which gaue vs soe much trouble. But wee must conforme our selues wholly, to the will of God; to whome humility, and patience in the midst of our frailties, is more pleasing, then a proud deuotion, and complacence, in the strength which wee conceane our selues to haue.

And if wee cannot obtayne at the hands of God, that wee may liue without faults: yet lett vs render him most humble thanks, for hauing giuen vs the knowledge of them. For

was perhaps any other thing, the perdition of that proud *Pharisee*, but the contentment, which he tooke, in his owne good workes? And did any thing saue the Publicane, but the knowledge which hee had, of his ill deedes; and the displeasur which he conceiued against himself for them, desiring mercy of our Lord? It is not the case of euery one, to conserue humility, in the midst of great vertues; but there be very few, whose are not disgusted with their owne faultes. And therefore, though the former of these two wayes, be higher: yet the later is safer. All which is dispensed by our God, who is of soueraigne wisdom, and who guides vs by seuerall wayes, to the same end, which is *himself*. And though wee be neuer so couetous, mee thinks this ought to stay our stomach with a sufficiency of comfort; that wee may hope to goe to heauen: whether it be, with the height, and perfection of vertue, as some goe: or by the knowledge of what we want, and doing penance for the same, as many others doe.

Lnc. 18.

But notwithstanding all this, wee must not forbear to imitate the best wee see: since our Lord hath giuen vs a desire thereof: and since an account is to be demaunded of vs, if wee doe it not. Wee must therefore desire, to be better, (soe that yet withall wee loose not our inward peace) though wee obtayne not all wee desire. For otherwise, I doe not thinke that euer there was a man, in the world (leauing him onely aside, whome euery

body knowes ) who desired not to be better, then he was ; but yet this did not take their peace from them , because they desired nothing out of any particular appetite , which neuer confesses that it hath enough ; but onely for the loue of God , with whos distribution, and portion , they would be well content, though he gaue them lesse ; esteeming that to bee true loue , which contents it self with what he giues ; more then to desire to haue much ; though *self-loue* tell vs, that wee desire it, but for the seruice of Almighty God.

And for my part I beleue , that there is noe peace to be had in this world ; but by patience. Nor doe I thinke ; that it is true patience, when a man is content to beare , with his neighbours ; if withall , he be not content to beare with himself. Not to the end , that he must fayle to punish , and to mend his faultes ; but that his hart may not be deiected , and he vnreasonably afflicted ; and that whatsoeuer happen , hee may bee able to keepe himself content , both within , and without ; but soe that yet withall ( as I was saying ) he still doe his diligences , to mend himself. Which yet if he should not wholly doe , it is better that he bee sorry for it , and that instantly he rise vp , with new alacrity ; which vses to encrease , and double our strength ; then that , whilest he conceiues himself to lament his faultes , for the *loue of God* , he should indeed displease the same God , by seruing him with a fowre kind of hart , and



with fallen wings, and such other braunches as vse to rise from this roote. Let the Conclusion be that, which S. Paul deliuers. *Let vs frequent prayer, in all things, giuing thanks to God, and soe wee shall be sure to doe well?* Our Lord Iesuo bee with you, and with vs all. Amen.

Thiss.  
5.

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A Letter to a Cauallier his freind wherein he teacheth how the afflictions which God sendes to his seruants are to put good men in hope and wicked men in feare.

THankes be giuen to Christ our lord for hauing made you a partaker of paine and trouble for it is the most certaine title to heauen which can be had vpon earth: since it doth enable vs to be like our lord who descended from heauen to giue vs light that we might loue him, and strength by his example, and grace by his merites. Let not the dispensation of the workes of God seeme cruelty in your sight: for as the rewarde which he giues is not light soe neither must the meanes be light whereby it is to be obtained. Nor is there any thing further off from being a matter of toyes or iest then that *which our lord hath prepared for such as loue him.* Now to the end that this may be knownen and rightly vnderstood it is fitt that they who are to

enjoy it may be soe treated as he was that soe the world may be vnbeguiled if it still conceiue that by liuing in iest they are to enjoy that great reward in earnest.

Our lord giues aduise to his seruants, and he threatens such as will needes be strangers to him. For to the former sorte of men he saith that they must thinke highly of his rewarde: since he will not giue it but vpon high tearmes. And as for these other he askes them how they thinke to escape the rigour of his handes, they who are his enemies: since euen his children be strictly treated who are yet elected for soe great a good. If we cast our eyes towards this beame of rigour and iustice which are the afflictions whereof we now speak, we shall finde that they conteyne greate occasions both of hope and feare. And on the one side the mercy of God is much glorified thereby and his iustice on the other. Let trouble expect to finde repose and let him feare affliction hereafter who doth not feele it now. For since in any man how iust soeuer he be there are many thinges which may deserue punishment though not in hell: (and this punishment is to be personally indured if it be not purged with soe great an excesse of loue as that the contrition may stand for the punishment as it did in *S. Mary Magdalen* and some others) it is plaine that eyther heere or in purgatory they must passe through fire. And though they who finde not in themselves soe great loue of God as to cause this greife which may stand

for a satisfaction, may thinke perhaps that they receiue hard measure in being saued by fire whilst others shall be saued without it yet indeed they are much deceiued in their account.

For the great loue of God euen heere on earth when men see that God is offended doth cause greater greife then that to which you are subiect. And that truth is seene by this then when one loues God greatly he would be glad of the paine you suffer soe that he might be free from that which he feesles for the offences which are committed against God. And at this wee must not wonder since there are persons who euen to free you from the paine wherein you are would indure themselves. And this also may serue for a prooffe that the loue which one beares to another puts him to more trouble then the paine it selfe would doe which the other feesles: that if your selfe loue another very much, you would not be ridd of your owne paine if it were vpon condition that the other must indure it for yow: which proues as I was saying that it would trouble you more in the personne of that other then in your owne.

Now if the loue of a creature can reach soe farre, how much more will the loue of the creature be able to doe, it being infused by the most holy spirit of our lord which farre exceeds all other force. And thus it growes to be a most certaine truth that eyther in this fashion or in that there is noe meanes to escape from suffering before we arriue to enioying. And tell him who

would complaine of this law, rather complaine that he is a man; & that he was not made an angell; and lett him complaine against iustice and reason which doe absolutely require that vertue must be obtained with labour and the reward must correspond with the vertue.

But who o lord who shall euer presume to cōplaine of thee as if thou didst treat them with rigour; since instantly thou stoppest their mouths with shewing that thou so loued the world as to giue thy onely begotten sonne, to the end that in the strength of these afflictions and sorowes and death which they charged vpon him, the world might escape the torments of hell and might triumph in heauen. Who I say o lord will presume to complaine when he shall see thy best beloued freindes to be soe seuerely handled, and obserue that in thy court it is hard to say which of these two haue the pre-eminence eyther afflictions or fauours; and that it was said by thy commaundement to one of thy fauourites. *Because thou wert accepted by God it was necessary that temptation should try thee.*

Doe not permitt your heart to sinke vnder your crosses but remember that heretofore you haue desired to doe and suffer somewhat for the loue of God *God is not deafe to the desires of our hartes.* He hath giuen that which he knew to be best for you; and if you thinke it heauy confide that he who sendes it, will giue you shoulders wherewith to beare it. That which afflicteth will haue an end, and that which giues repose will

succeed; but the latter will not be like the former, but incomparably greater. And if you tell me that you will renounce this later vpon condition that you may not endure the former, it is not well said nor doth it become a noble minde which desires, more to see it selfe in difficulty & trouble for the obtaining of vertue then to be idle and without exercise. Nor is it fitt that you who haue caried soe much courage in your hart through these warres of the Emperour should haue it faintely affected in the warre of God. We demaund not of you heere that you should conduct a whole army like some Captaine generall but onely that you traile your pike well & giue a good account of your persone, & of the place where you are put. Be not a coward in the lesse occasion whoe are soe valiant in the greater.

Put your selfe wholly into the passion of our lord and learne thereby how much he endured and how great loue he bore to you; since being able to redeeme you by other meanes yet he would not doe it but vpon the price of his excessiue paines and sorrowes. And soe it comes to passe that as he in one hower did more loue his father then all mankinde put together in all their liues, soe in one hower did he passe through more bitter sorrowes then all mankinde; and there was not in the whole liues of them all to be found eyther any *loue* or any *greife* like his.

Straine your selfe to a desire of enduring somewhat for him. Be not a slaue since he loues you and treats you as a sonne For the father cor-

redes the sonne and you may hold your selfe for his sonne since he correctes you. Lone your father depart from your selfe and giue your selfe to God. Say to him *I will follow thee though it be by the way of sorrow I will present thee with this suffering. I will not giue thee any thing of little value; but that which may cost me my blood, that soe thou mayest to me as thou didst to Abraham, Quia fecisti hanc rem & non pepercisti vnigenito tuo propter me &c.* Now if God take it soe well that a man giue his sonne for the loue of God how much reason is it that man should be very gratefull to god for the giuing of his sonne for man. And he onely is indeede thankfull for the benefitt who in recompence thereof giues his owne sonne to god; namely that thing which his hart would most be troubled to leaue and this because God will haue it soe.

Consider the true Originall of loue which God did beare you, but let it be with fetching this resolution from thence that as they drew blood from him & gaue sorrowes to him he may giue them to you; and as they gaue him paine soe he may giue paine to you. For infallibly if soe you shall answere to the sorrowes of God with your sorrowes he will answere to those sorrowes of yours with such a reward as shal make you esteeme your selfe happie for hauing endured them. And though our flesh beleue not this yet faith must supply that defect & you must sing. *Lati sumus pro diebus quibus nos humiliasti annis quibus vidimus mala.* So God grant it may be. Amen.

A Letter of the Authour, to a holy Religious woman written in a time when she was subiect to some perturbations, and persecutions, about a booke which she was wished to publish. He declares how she is to cary her selfe in spirituall things; and which is the safest way, how to treat with God, and to vse that gift of Prayer, which she had.

THE grace and peace of Iesus Christ our Lord be euer with you; When I accepted, to read that booke of yours, which was sent me; it was not soe much out of any opinion, that I was able to iudge, of these things, which are conteyned therein; as because I thought, that, with the fauour of our lord, my selfe might profit, by them. And I thanke Christ, that althought I haue not read it with that repose, which had beene fitt; yet I was comforted thereby; & may alsoe be benefitted otherwise, if the fault be not mine owne. And truly, though I might receiue comfort by reading it, without reflecting vpon it otherwise: Yet me thinkes, the respect I owe both to the matter it selfe, as also to the person who commendes it vnto me, despenses not with me, in forbearing to say some part of what I thinke thereof: at least, in generall tearmes.

The booke is not fitt, to come into the hands of many. For the words must be reformed in

some partes thereof, & declared in others. And some things may be profitable to your spirit, which would not be soe, if they should be followed by others. For the particular wayes, whereby God guides some, are not fitt for all. These, or the most of them, I haue noted downe, and I will putt them into order, as soone as I can: & I shall easily finde meanes to send them to you. For if you saw my infirmities accompanied with my other necessary employments; I beleue they would rather moue you to compassion, then to any accusation of me for negligence.

The doctrine of your prayer, for the most part is good: and you may very safely beleue it; and practise it, and in your Raptures, I finde these signes which true Raptures haue.

The way of God's teaching a soule, without the vse of the *imagination*, and without eyther *interiour*, or *exteriour wordes*, is very safe; I finde nothing therein, wherat to stumble: and S. Augustine speakes well of it.

Those *interiour* and *exteriour wordes*, haue deceiued many in our times: and the *exteriour* are the lesse safe of the two, To discerne, that they proceede not from our owne spirit is an easy matter: but to finde whether they grow from a *good spirit*, or from a *bad* is more hard. Men giue many rules, whereby to know if they bee of our Lord: and one of them is, if they be spoken in some time of great spirituall necessity: Or if a man profit much by them,

whether it be by way of comforting him, when he is in temptation, or desolation: or for the preuention of any danger &c. For if euen a wise good man, will not speake a word which is not of much weight: much lesse will that be done, by almighty God. And considering both this, and that the wordes must be agreeable to holy Scripture, & the doctrine of the Church: I am of opinion that these wordes, which are mentioned in your booke, or the greatest part of them are of God.

That, whereof there is more doubt are the *imaginary*, or *corporall visions*; whereof you speak. These must in noe case be desired; and if they come without being desired, yet must you auoyd them, as much as you can. We must beseech our Lord, that he will not suffer vs, to walke by the way of *seeing*; but as for the good sight of himselfe, and of his Saints, that he will keepe it for heauen; and that heere, he will be pleased to conduct vs, by the plaine way, as he doth his faithfull freindes. And by other good meanes, we must also procure to auoyd those thinges.

But yet, when all this is done, if the *visions* last, and if the soule reape profit by them; and if the sight thereof induce it not to vanity, but to increase of humility; if that which they say be agreeable to the doctrine of the Church; if they continue any long time and with that interiour kinde of satisfaction, which may better be felt, then declared; by this time me thinkes, I

see howe ~~use~~ why we should flye them any longer. Though ~~no~~ noe bodye is to trust his owne priuate opinion herein: but he must instantly communicate the matter with some person, who is able to giue him light. This is the generall course, which must be taken, in all these things; & we may well hope in God, that whoe hath humility to submitt himselfe to the iudgment of others, God will not suffer him to be deceiued, since he procures to walke in the right way.

But the while noe man should easily condemn those things, vpon the onely reason of obseruing that the person to whome they be vouchsafed are not perfect. For it is noe new thing, for the goodnes of our lord to draw men out of ill delights, and euen out of sinnes, (and they great ones) by giuing them very sweet consolations of his owne, as I haue scene him doe. For whoe shall limitt the goodnes of our lord? especially since these thinges are not vouchsafed for the meritts of the partie, or because he is better growen in spirit then another but sometimes to such as are most weak. And as they doe not necessarily make a man more a Saint, then he was; soe neither are they alwayes giuen to greatest Saints.

But yet they haue noe reason, who discredit such thinges as these, because they are very high: and for that it seemes to them incredible, that soe infinit a maiesty should abase it selfe to such an amorous communication, with a

poore creature. It is written that *God is loue*, and if he be *loue* he must needs be infinitt *loue*, and infinitt *goodnes*. And from the hand of such *loue*, and such *goodnes*, it is noe meruaile, if some soules receiue such excesses of *loue*, as may trouble others, who vnderstand them not. And though men may vnderstand by faith, that there are such thinges in the world, yet the particular experience of this amorous, and more then morbus proceeding, which God houldes with whome he will: this I say, vnlesse it be possessed, a man cannot well vnderstand, to what degree or point, it arriues. I haue seene many scandalized at the heroicall actes of the loue of our lord God towards his creatures. And because themselves are very farre from receiuing those fauours, they cannot thinke that God will doe that to others, which they finde him not to doe towards them. And though it were reason, that euen because it is an act of *loue*, and such *loue*, as castes vs into admiration, it should betaken for a signe why to thinke it were of God, (since he is wonderfull in all his workes and much more in those of his mercy yet from thence fetch they reasons why they should not beleieue them, from whence they should fetch reasons to beleieue them; provided alwayes that there be a concurrence of other circumstances, which shew that the thing in it selfe, is good.

For your part, my opinion is, that, by what I can perceiue in your booke, you haue made

resistance to such thinges as these, euen more then it was fitt you should. Me thinkes they haue profitted your soule, and especially they haue made you know your owne miserie, and faulres, and enabled you to mend them I finde that they haue lasted long, & that euer they haue beene with spirituall profit. They incite you to the loue of God, to the cōtempt of your self, and to the doeing of pennance. I see noe reason why I should condemne them, but I incline to thinke that they are right. But yet euer with this condition, that you vse great caution, and that you goe not with entire confidence, especially if that which happens be not vsuall with you, or when it requires you to doe any particular thing, which is not very plaine, but subject to some question. In all these cases, & the like, you must suspend your beleife, and instantly aske counsell.

I also thinke good to lett you know, that, though these thinges be of God, yet the enemy may mingle somewhat with them; & therefore you must neuer be without care & feare in such thinges as these. And you must further know that though they be of God you must not yet reflect vpon them with too much estimation; because sanctity consists not in these thinges, *but in the humble loue of God, and your neighbour,* And as for these others, they are to be feared, euen when they are right; and you must passe from the thought thereof, to the procuring of humility, & other vertues, with the loue of our

lord. You must alsoe be sure not to adore any of those *visions*, but onely adore Christ our Lord in *heauen* or in the *Sacrament*. And if it be a *vision* of any *Saint*, you must lift vp your heart to *heauen*, & to that which is represented in your *imagination*; and you neede noe more, but that the *image* may serue to cary you vp to that which is represented by it.

I must alsoe tell you, that these thinges cōtey-
ned in this booke, happen to many others in
these times; and this, with great certainty that
they are from God; *whose hand is not shortened*, to
doe that now, which he did in former ages; &
this in the weaker sorte of vessalls that soe he
may be glorified the more.

Goe you on, in your way: but soe as that you
bee euer in feare of theeues; and that still you
be asking, if the way be right. And giue thākes
to our Lord, for that he hath bestowed ypon
you, the loue of him, and the knowledge of
your selfe; and a loue of pennance, and of the
Crosse. And as for those other thinges make noe
very high account thereof; though yet on the
other side, you must not despise them, because
they are signes which shew, that many of them
are sent by our lord; and euen they which are,
not, cannot hurt you, if you aske counsaile.

I know not how to beleue, that I haue
beene able to write this by any strength of mi-
ne; for I haue none at all; but your prayer hath
done it. I beseech you euen for the loue of
our lord *Iesus Christ*, to laye it as a charge

vpōn your selfe to pray for me. For he knowes, that I aske it as being vrged by great necessities; and I thinke, this word alone will suffice for the obliging you, to doe what I desire. And now I beg leaue of you, that I may end this letter, since I am vnder promise to goe write another. *Iesus* be glorified by all, and in all. Amen.

*A Letter Written to a Lady, encouraging
her to beare with patience, the affli-
ctions which were sent her,
by our lord.*

Cant.
7.

MAdam, I would fayne aske your ladyship, what kinde of taste the fruites of the *Crosse* carry with them, since you are feeding so abundantly thereon. Our lord sayd thus, *I will clymb vp to the Palme tree, and gather the fruit thereof*: and it seemes that he hath taken your ladyship by the hand, and drawne you vp with him: to the end, that if heeretofore you went vp with him by contemplation, to consider how he fedd vpon them: he is now no more content, that you onely accompany him, by hauing compassion of his paynes, but he will haue you eate with him at that table of the *Crosse*, & be a witnesse by experience, of that which he

suffered, when he was feeding vpon that fruite.

I dare confidently say, that that soule is happy, which standes at the foote of the *Crosse* of the *Sonne*, in society with the *Mother* of God, who fed at the same table: and was suffering torment, yea and was euen crucified in her soule with him. For there is not a more acceptable thing in the eyes of the Father, then to behold his *Sonne*, and to see them who accompany the same *Sonne*, in the imitation of his affliction and *Crosse*. Let noe man deceiue himselfe, by thinking that God is in loue with fooleries and conceytes; or that euery absurd idle fellow shall raigne with him, in his kingdome. The fauour of God, is reserved for such as loue tribulation. No man shall raigne with him, but such a one as is crucified: That, in fine the world may know, that forasmuch as he settes that king dome at so high a rate, it is no ordinary place, but most abundant in treasures, and delights, since God himselfe is the glory thereof: and that they may resolute with fresh courage, to despise all transitory gult, and to endure all kinde of Crosses.

How would your ladyship haue our lord proceede towards you, but so a hee is wont, and will be sure to proceede, with his beloued Children? What would you haue him doe, but treat you as his Father treated him? *As my Father loued mee, so doe I loue you*, saith our lord. And now, if any man will make a pawse, to consider how the Father treated his Sonne and

such a *Sonne*, he will patiently endure his owne condition, now sharpe soeuer it may seeme. Madam, haue patience yett a while, for this tempest will passe, & you will reioyce, that you had it, to passe through. Bow downe that necke of yours, to the will of your heavenly Father; for so did *Iesus Christ* our lord, when they passed that rope ouer his head, which euen flect his necke, and hee, the while, held his peace, both with his harte, and with his tongue, through the obedience which he carryed to his Father. What doth that hard halter, vpon so delicate a necke: and that heauy crosse, vpon those weak, and weary shoulders, declare to vs; but that wee must bee obedient in suffering afflictions, though they should euen defeate vs, and pluck our very hartes out of our bodies?

Eccl. 2. It is not iust nor fitt, that your ladyship should take vpon you to dispose of your owne life, and to choose, & say, *This I will, and that other, I will not, doe or haue*; since you haue offered vp your selfe so often, as the true slaue of our lord, to the accomplishment of euery inclination of his holy will. For it is against all reason, that now you should vn say that in your affliction, which formerly you affirmed in time of peace. *Not* must you be like that counterfected kinde of freind, who in time of prosperity, is wont to make many offers, but when they would bring him to performance, he vn sayes himselfe.

Wee be to them, sayth the scripture, *who haue lost their sufferance*; imploying such persons, as

being weary of enduring, and expecting, went headlong with their hartes to the ground, as men who would no longer beare their burdens. Madam, *The lust man liues by sayth, and our lord requires to be expected, though he slay; for in fine, he promises that he will come.* But if a man haue a clocke, which goeth too fast, and if the time seeme too longe, before God giue the remedy, that must then be sayd to him, which is in Esay: *He who beleiueth, lett him not be too hasty; but, lett him place his felicity in longanimity. as S. Peter sayth.*

Madam, our lord will come and comfort you. The sea is all in tumult, and the waues will needes drowne the ship: and our lord is in a profound sleepe, like one who throwes a stone, and then hides his hand: or who strikes, & flies. It is he, who raysed the tempest, & then instantly layd himselfe to sleepe. It is he and no other, who hath designed your ladyship to these tribulations. It is he who afflicteth, and woundes, and without him nothing can be done. And he who hath knowne so well, how to strike, and hath beene so diligent to afflict, is now fallen asleepe, when they are seeking remedy at his handes, and the more they begg comfort of him, the more he doth sometimes encrease discomfort. And yet, notwithstanding all this, he will haue vs possesse a liuely sayth, which, in all these miseries, must not fayle vs. And if wee haue not this sayth, wee shall be sure, that when he wakes, he will reprove vs, and say. *O men of little sayth, why are you asfraid.*

A. 2.

2. Pet.

2.
Matth.
8.Matth.
8.

You may see, Madam, by this; how liuely our Lord will haue our faith to bee, which may enable vs to confide, in him; how fresh, how well tryed, and passed euen through the very fire. For as chastity is tryed by the temptations which are contrary thereunto; as humility is tryed by dishonours; patience by afflictions; and charity by rendring good for euill; so is faith and confidence, made euident, when God sendes such aduersities, as may seeme to putt men in a manner, euen out of their witts; and when he, the while hides himselfe, and seemes to add to them so much the more, as he is the more desired to diminish them.

Math.
15. Euen by this pace wee must passe, if wee will heare this worde from our Lord's mouth, *O woman great is thy faith.* In this match of wrastring, must wee ouercome, if wee will pretend to the name, and crowne of such, as are perfectly, and truly faithfull. And wee must accept of scourges, which may slice vs euen to the very soule; and yet wee must beleue that they are embracements of great, and tender loue.

In this which exteriorly may seeme to be the wrath of God, wee must beleue his diuine harre, to be most peaceable, and his bowells most paternall towards vs, nor must wee argue according to the feeling of flesh & bloud, but according to faith, which ouercomes and fooles all such discourse. This, Madam, is *the wisdom of the Crosse*, which makes the

ſoule, with ſhutt eyes, ſubmitt it ſelfe to the holy will of God. And by thus not iudging, but conſiding in him, it growes wiſe beyond the wiſedome of the whole world. For let him who deſires to know, and pleaſe God, not raiſe his eyes, but let him abaſe them, with humility, and not liſte his indgments: and that man ſhall arriue to true knowledge: and ſhall finde that our lord of power, is entirely ſweete towards his ſeruants: and doth then endue them with the greateſt bleſſings, when to the eyes of fleſh and bloud, hee may ſeeme moſt to haue forſaken them.

It is now long agoe, ſince your ladyſhip hath ſung this ſong, *My beloved to mee, and I to him.* But it is now, that you ſhould eſpecially ſinge it; for theſe delicate warbling notes, are beſt uſed in theſe tunes of trouble. Your beloved lookes vpon you, and takes care of you: looke you alſo vpon him, and confide, in ſuch a taker of care. He is your Father, though he ſcourge you: be you his daughter, in receiuing his correction, with obedience and giuing of thanks. And if you be in much payne, whiſt you feele the ſcourge, let it be tempered, by conſidering the hand from whence it comes, your beloved he is: and he loues you more, then he is beloved by you. He corrects you with loue: & doe you alſo receiue it with loue, that ſo you may anſwere our lord in the ſame tune, wherein he ſpeakes. He hath a minde to purify you by fire: do not fly of from the Cru-

Cant. 2

syble, whatsoeuer payne it may put you to. For it is better to become pure from the vncleanes of earth, which is ones owne will, and withall to bee broken in pieces; then to be whole otherwise.

Pf. 16.

Sing you thus to our lord, *Thou hast tryed my hart and thou hast visited mee by night; thou hast examined mee with fire and thou hast not found wickednes in mee.* For thus doth God purify his elect; and he who is not proued, and purified thus, is noe Sonne, and shall be noe heire of his. And for as much as it is now soe long a time, since your ladyship hath soe fayre euidence, that you are borne to inheritt; procure you to pay with readines, that rent charge, which is layd vpon your land. This inheritance is very rich and glorious, but the heires thereof must suffer much tribulation in this world. They are to be vntyed, and taken of from the *Crosse* heere, when they goe vp to raigne there; and men must not think of going from one pleasure, to another. The bulls which are of a generous kind goe all darterd, and wounded, out of the *Place*; but such as are base and cowardly, retourne home, in whole skinnes. Iust soe is the good Chriitian, who is to be pierced on all sides. And when tyrants, and executioners are wanting, they shall haue enough to suffer, in theyre owne houses, by theyre children, theyre husbands, and theyre freyndes, who will by certayne sweete, and and smooth wayes, torment them worse then those others.

It is most certaine, that to see one suffer whome wee loue, is a very knife at our hartes: and loue is our executioner; and the more loue there is, soe much is the executioner more cruell. Butt yett lett vs not turne away our face from him. For this *loue*, was the, executioner of *Iesus Christ* our lord, which putt him to more payne, then all those visible executioners; and this was the executioner of his blessed Mother alsoe, and of as many elect, as God hath had. I would haue your ladyship prepare your head to be cutt of, and your harte to be tormented by this executioner; and you must procure to fight stoutely, in the presence of God, and of all his celestiall court, since such an excellent Crowne of glory is prepared for you. Our lord, who sends you this tribulation, knowes the time which is most fitt for comforte, and hee will provide it for you, when it shall be best. In the meane time I beseech him to giue your ladyship patience, and to remayne with you for euer, Amen.



*A Letter of the Authour to a Religious woman,
who was his ghostly childe. Of the mercy which
God shewes to such as he calles to Religion, and
of the exercises and obligation of a Religious
woman.*

SERVANT OF IESVS CHRIST

I Haue beene thinking sometimes, whither
our lord might not ere this haue taken you out
of this life, to giue you the fruition of himselfe.
For to be aliue and to remaine soe long without
letting me know how your soule doth, seemes
to me a kind of incredible thing. Though yet it
be true, that our lord some times, giues a soule
soe great feeling of himselfe, that it remem-
bers nothing els because it is wholly employed
vpon him, who is *all things*. I beseech his good-
nes, that this may haue beene the cause of your
silence. For then, I shall not onely, not complay-
ne, but greatly reioyce. For what other thing,
can I soe well desire for your soule, which in our
lord, I loue; as to see it all employed, in louing,
and in being beloued by him. This is the end, of
all the paines which he hath taken with your
soule, and of all the fauours which he hath be-
stowed vpon it.

Tell me, O spouse of Christ our lord, how
you doe. Doe you loue him much, and doe you

ould him fast, in your bosome? is your heart euen wounded, with the care you haue, to keepe him content; and to seeke his holy will, though it be in contradiction of your owne? For though the loue of our lord, be the ioy, and solace of our soules; yet, on the other side, it suffers them not to repose; but like a continuall spurre, is solliciting and vrging them on, that foe euery day, they may please him whome they loue, more and more. For this reason this *loue*, is compared to fire, which neuer is at rest; but the liuely flame thereof, is euer working, and struiuing vpward. This *loue*, will haue nothing to doe with slackenes; nor knowes it, how to take any rest, but in our lord. And this is the *loue*, of a Loyal *spouse*, which, it is reason that you be, in *performance*, since you are soe in *profession*; & since, you haue an inward vocation, to put that in practise, to which you were called.

Doe not forgett the *day*, on which you offered your selfe to your *spouse*, by the hand of your *Prelatt*. Nor that other day, when your *spouse* conueyed his hand, into your heart, making you vnderstand both your selfe, and him. He said in your soule, *let light be made*: and then all darkenes, and sorrow fled away: and now, like one who sees the light of heauen, you liue in ioy, because you know which way you may goe, without danger of falling. For if you be carefull to keepe those *dayes* in mind, you will see, that by the former of them, you were bound to lodge your loue vpon our lord after a

Psal.
106.

1. king.
17.

very particular manner, because the contract of marriage obliges either partie, to loue the other. And on the second day our lord shewed the loue which he bore to you; and he gaue you strength to pay according, to your weakenes, the loue which you owe to him. For what haue you out of your owne stocke, but obligations? and what meanes haue you to pay any thing towards the coming out of debt: you, being a poore ingaged creature; who indeed deserued to be euer kept in prison, in miserie, and in chaynes, as *Danid* saith. But the rich *Iesus Christ*, hath giuen you the plenty of his grace, whereby you may know and loue him, and may ouercome your contraries; and plucke downe that strong *Golias*; which is the Deuill, who biddes battaille against all such, as resolute to serue Christ our Lord.

It is not reason, I say, it is not reason, that you should forgett what you owe, nor how God hath enabled you to pay. And for that which God hath giuen you, you are much the more bound to serue him. For to be a religious woman is the condition of many; but to receiue soe particular lights, and fauours from heauen, wherewith to serue our lord, is the case of few. *Abraham*, bestowed gifts, euen ypon those children which hee had by lesse principall wiues; but he left his inheritance, and estate, to the lawfull sonne of that wife of his, who was most beloued; that wee may vnderstand thereby the difference of the gifts

of God, which hee imparteth, in this life, to severall persons.

Our lord be thanked, for that your *lines, and lottes, are fallen into the best ground*; forasmuch as grace was giuen yow, whereby to make you *change* your state of life, and to despise the world with your whole heart, and to despise also your selfe; and to obey the superiour, of your *Monastery*, as your mother, and to loue all your sisters, and Almighty God, more then the very apples of your eyes. This is that caelestiall fauour, which was done you, that you might be rich, and well supplied with all thinges necessary, in Christ our Lord crucified, and from thence comes this soe hopefull and happy change, which you haue made, in the manner of your life, and that inuisible beauty, wherewith your soule is endewed.

And what now remaines, but that you be like one, who hath acquired great worldly riches, and who instantly entertaines seruants, to keepe it. And soe you must be carefull, to keepe that which our lord hath giuen you, least els your soule turne beggar, after it hath beene soe rich; which is a kind of life, of more affliction and greife, then theirs, whoe neuer knew what belonged to riches. Remember what your *spouse* saith; and conceiue that he saith it to you, as indeed he doth, *Now thou art whole, soe thou sinne noe more, least a worse thing happen to thee.* Liue with a holy doubt,

and care, how you may keepe that safe, which our lord hath giuen you; and how yet withall, you may gaine *fine other talents*, to the *fine* you haue; and whether or noe you haue *oyle in your lampe*, and that such, as may bee able to last many yeares. And till the very houre of your death, let this worde sound in your eares, *Behold your sponse comes, goe forth to meete him*. For if you liue with this care, you will still be well employed, and you will not haue leasure to cast your eyes vpon any thing of this life. For this alone suffices to giue vs enough to thinke vpon; yea and to grow weake withall.

The holy scripture saith, that this alone, is enough to breake our sleepes. And if you haue not this care, I shalbe full of sorrow for it. For by the want thereof, vanity and curiosity doe streight enter in, and as many tales of the liues of others, as they make who take noe heede to their owne. And soe by little and little, a soule growes to be seauen times worse, then it was before.

I expect not to receiue such fruites, and soe full of bitterness at your charitable handes, but rather the fruites of benediction, and sweetnes; *like a tree which is planted neare the streames of water*; which, with the leaues, and with the fruit, giues that man a gladd heart, who tooke care thereof. But yet if by humane frailty, you be fallen into any negligence, as it happens sometimes: see that instantly you wake, and breake of that sleepe.

Mat.

25.

least it proue *in riall* to you. And beg pardon of our lord, who is full of mercy, and benignity. For though he be angry with the defectes of such as haue already knowne him, and will punish them yet he driues not away his children: and he giues them correction, not with fury, but with the rod of a Father. Goe you therefore instantly to him, though you know you haue offended him, for perhaps hee may haue shewed you his anger, to the end that yow should remoue it from him, by your humility, and purpose of amendment. He will instantly forgiue you, and sometimes he impartes particular fauours, euen as if it were in recompence of our carelesenes.

Take heed you grow not stiff, and fixed in tepidity, for this is a disease very hardly cured. And yet, on the other side, you must not be dismayed, if you be not alwayes in soe great seruour as were fit. For you are but a woman, and noe Angell: you are but weake, and not indewed with much strength. The greatest courtesy you can doe your greatest enemy, is to remaine fallen, in the way (as some cripple might be in a slough of mire) with the bones as it were, of your soule broken through distrust, as if now you had noe more to doe, with the busines of getting vp to heauen.

Our lord's pleasure is, that you should thinke highly of his goodnes: and that he driues them not away, who knowing their owne weaknes, goe, and seeke for strength, and remedy at

his hands And indeed our pride is soe very great that for the cure thereof, he lettes vs fall many times, to the committing of these very things, which had formerly beene very farre from vs, that soe being fallen, we may rise againe. And then, knowing by experience, what kinde of thinges we are, we grow to thanke our lord, for that which he is to vs, and from that time forward, we despise our selues, & we begin to liue with greater doubt, and care, and feare: least we happen to loose that, a second time, which had beene lost by vs, once before.

Thus doth our most wise phisitian, and most louing farher, draw our cure, out of our very woundes themselues; and life, out of our death, and he shewes his goodnes, by our wickednes. And though we fight sometimes, against him, with the weapons of sinne, which giues him prouocation, yet his goodnes steps out like a conquerour, and impartes a thousand millions of benefits to vs.

Be sure therefore, that you serue this lord, with all the force you haue. And if hitherto you haue done soe, giue him thanks for it, and if you haue failed thereof, see you retourne to him, with shame, and firme purpose of amendment. Comfort your self also with the holy *Sacraments* of the *Church*, they beeing the remedies which he hath left. And put your selfe into a new way, and now, at last, learne to trip noe more vpon that, at which you stumbled most before. Soe that you may be of their number, of whome

S. Paul saith that all things cooperate to the good of them, who loue God. For howsoeuer they may fall, they are not brused to death, because our lord conueyes his hand vnder them, to receiue them. In the midst of these things, I beseech you, call my miseries to mind, that you may obtaine mercy for me of our lord. And deliuer my salutations to all those persons in your house, who serue our Lord. I beseech him to be your æternall loue. Amen.

Rom. 8.

*A Letter of the Author to a freind of his, whome
God had called to lead a spirituall life, by
meanes of his preaching.*

TO those many obligations into which you put me by your letters, I answere late, and ill. And though I be confounded therewith, yet I hope Christ our lord hath giuen you some little crumme, of Charity. Now the first condition thereof, is (by the testimony of him who had store of it, and who knew it well) *Quia pateriens est*, That it is patient. I beseech that immense fountaine of Charity, to encrease it in you, till you be enabled thereby, euen to lay downe your life, for your enemyes, as Christ our lord layd downe his for vs.

2 Cor

12

You complayne of drynesse in deuotion, though yet I conceiue you speake it not, by way of complaynt, but onely, as relating to one who loues you, the disposition wherein, you finde your soule. And I say, that so long as this

drynes reaches not to weaken your desire of vertue it is noe such thing, as ought to putt you to much payne. For that which is questioned thereby, is but the losse of a certaine *sweetenes*, in the things of God, though yet this is wont to be a spurre, to make such men quitt themselves, and to fly faster on towards our Lord, who knowe how to make right vse thereof. And because I desire all good to you, whether it be in much, or little; I wish that you were endewed, with a *Loue of God*, which were both *strong*, and *wise*, and *sweete* also, since a loue with all these qualities, is due to him, to whome wee owe our *loue*. But yet, if he impart that loue alone, which is *strong*, and *wise*, it will be, because he intends to doe vs other secret fauours, bymeanes which are vnknownen to vs, and to vnty vs from our selues, and to exercise our vertue, whereof there will bee great neede, for a man whoe treates with him, who is infinitely wise and doth extreame-ly like, that noe man should be so in his owne eyes.

Your care must therefore bee to follow on, according to that strength, which our Lord giues yow; for his grace, will not faile. And yow must giue him thanks, both for that which yow vnderstand; and for that also which you vnderstand not; and in this doth your safety consist. And as you grow elder, and to haue more experience, of the very little which any man is

able to doe, towards the contriuing of things, how small soeuer they may bee; you will be confirmed more, and more, in the good custome, which you beginne to take, to hould your peace. And you will perceiue, that a busines will then be well dispatched, when wee speake at lardge with God, and but a little with men.

This ignorancy of ours, is an vnspeakeable kinde of thing; and soe is our setting our selues out, and our ignorant kinde of zeale, to doe good. And wee haue much, and much a doe, to beleue it, till wee haue bought this knowledge, vpon the price of many errours, which wee shall haue committed. For wee inherit, from our first parents, a certaine fly, and secrett desire, of a kinde of diuinity, which cannot be sought without theft. This makes vs imitate our first fathers, therein; and to denie that things may be done, how, and when wee list; with certaine other deepe, and most secret rootes of pride, which are neuer to bee discovered, without light from heauen; and this cannot be obtayned, without much *Prayer*.

As for the particular of those soules, which you desire to reduce; I tell you, as I did before, that you must cordially recommend the busines to our Lord, and hope well that you shall haue good successe. And be you not troubled, or afflicted, since you know, that you haue a father in heauen, who calls you

Gen. 3.

towards him, and he will be your guide, in the way. Spend your tyme, at the *present*, the best you can, and as for the *future*, doe not vex your selfe; but make account that nothing, but your owne negligence, can take God from you. Fight therefore, against this *negligence*; & if you overcome it, you will finde by experience, that the *Exchange* or Burse is a very *Cell* to you; and, that *business* is but as a Riuer, which may serue to wash you cleane.

The way, wherein God hath placed you, requires that more diligence bee vsed then that which your letter sayth you vse, concerning the constancy of your deuotions. And if I were with you, I could tell you of straunge things which haue happened to men, who had beene slacke in performing their good exercises. Whereby you might perceiue, that our Lord esteemes it not as any small infirmity, for a man to be a *Lunaticke*; sometymes doing his duty, and sometymes, not. A cleare signe it is, of a soule in subiection to selfewill, to doe a thing when the humour serues, and afterward, vpon mere humour, to lett it alone. And forasmuch as such men want the *abnegation of themselves*, they are in fault, both when they cease from doing any thing; and soe are they alsoe, when they doe it; because they liue, butt in themselves. And the punishment, which our Lord inflicteth vpon these men, is that hee is not liberall of

himselfe to them, when they desire it; because they are not liberall of themselues to him, when he requires it. Wee must therefore be sure, to aske pardon, for the little constancy which wee haue vsed, in the seruice of our Lord; and to reforme our selues with an entire *resignation* into his hands, concerning the successe of our endeauours, whether they be more, or lesse.

Take courage once to loose your selfe, for the loue of our Lord; obeying that which he commaunds; and neuer looke, vpon what is to follow vpon it. For whether it be *drynes*, or *denotion*, it cannot faile to be a fauour, since it is sure to be the pleasure of our Lord. And by how much the more, you shall be able to liue towards the contenting of him; and to be dead towards the seeking of your owne contentment, soe much the more happy shall you be. Spend not time at all, in thinking whether it were best, to accept, or els to refuse, that busines, whereof they wrott to you, *that without doubt it would be done*. For this is the signe, of a hart not deliuered vp to recollection, and which easily is induced to loose the *present tyme*, with care of the *future*. Forget it; and beseech our Lord, that it may not proue a temptation to you; since he knowes your weaknes.

And liue without perplexity, or affliction of minde, solemnizing such a Feast to our Lord, as that your hart beeing asked,

what care it hath, it may answere you, none at all, but onely that I may be soe happy, as to giue this little tyme, to our Lord. All that swarues from this, is not sound, whatsoeuer cōplexion it may carry.

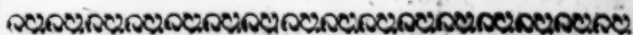
And heere it comes fittly in, to weigh, what it is *to bee changing from one thing to another.* All those are effects of a heart which is but slack, and not imployed about that, whereunto it was called; which is, *a continuall intercourse with our Lord*; who lookes vpon it in euery moment of tyme; and desires it to looke as often towards him, and to open it self to him, because indeede, it is his owne: and to deny it self to all that, which is not God.

O base abominable man, in whose hart God desires to repose, and to giue it rest; and yet the man goes labouring heere, and there; and God tells him, the while, that to the end he may finde rest, he must enter into himselfe, and must dye there to himself; and that so, he shall finde his true safety, & life; and that a certaine *Sunne* shall then rise to him, which will discharge all those former clouds, and sorrowes, & he shall come to vnderstand certaine things, whereof he knowes nothing yet.

Humility, and diligence are needfull heere, for the keeping of our harts shutt vp. And our Lord dyed for this, that wee might haue strength to dye to our selues for his sake, & to keepe our harts recollected. Christ our Lord, be your light. But take you heede of being

delirous

desirous to knowe things concerning Mentall Prayer, more by speculation, then by practise. For our lord, is the teacher of *Infants*, & *abscondit se*, & *sua*, & *prudentibus*: he hides both himselfe and his secrets, from all such, as are but worldly wise.



*A Letter of the Authour to a Cauallier
whome hee sought to carry on to the
state of Religion.*

THese great fishes are hard to be taken, and a man had neede make many turnes with them vp and downe the riuer, till they be weary, that soe through the little strength they haue left, the hooke may quietly fetch them vp. And therefore wee must not meruaile, if our lord giue you soe many knockes; contradicting that which you had formerly in your thought, and desire. And the cause of all I conceiue without doubt, to be your owne *proper will* and *iudgment*: which be hard things to subdue, and still are ready to rebell. Wee haue need that our lord should tire them out, with a multitude of blowes, and should kill them, to the end that they may noe longer liue in you, but that we may continue in the faith of our lord, and in obedience to his holy will: I would haue you

vnderstand what this curbe meanes, and these tokens of reproofe, which our lord shewes you. *For as he is praised, who is an intelligent servant, and growes acceptable to our lord thereby; so is he discommended, whoe vnderstandes not, I say not onely the wordes, but the corrections also of our lord.*

You must conceiue, that there is nothing, which importes you soe much, as to be vntyed from your owne opinion, and conceit; and that *Omnis sapientia tua denotata sit, vt sic clames ad Deum, & de necessitatibus tuis liberet te.* That all your wisdom is at a *non plus*, and that soe crying out to God, he may deliuer you out of your necessities. For what *Idolatri* is more preiudiciall, then that a man should relye vpon his owne opinion? And what mariage is soe monstrous, as for a man to be married to his owne will? Such fearfull and abominable *monsters* rise from hence, as that they precipitate him who breeds them into the very bottomles pit of hell. If you beleiue not me, doe but take order, that a man may not follow his *owne opinion*, and not loue his *owne will*, and then I will vndertake, that there shalbe noe hell for him. You must therefore offer your selfe, as a piece of clay, into the handes of that soueraigne *Potter*; and say that to him, which is written *Fictor noster es, nos vero lutum.* *Thou art our framer, and we are noe better then a piece of clay.* Resolue that to be the best, which is contrary to your owne will. For so ill affected is our will, that for the onely

Isay 64.

reason, why a thing is much desired, a man may safely apprehend, and doubt, that it is not good. For that which pleaseth it, is ill; & what confidence can he then repose therein.

Haue great care to consider, of the way, wherein God guides you; for you shall be called to an account thereof; And when you haue learned this science, you shalbe wise, in the sight of God. You must be enamoured of nothing vnder heauen (how pretious soeuer it may seeme) but onely with seeking the good pleasure of God. And if it should soe happen: that we should obtaine noe part of that which we particularly sought: yet that very thing it self, is all the riches both of this world, and of heauen, for God is pleased thereby: and the contentment of God, is God himself: and he who loues it, loues God, and he who professes it professes God.

Concerning those cōplaintes, which you are making against your self, I well beleiue, that you haue reason: since you are a man, and not yet in heauen. And you doe well to reprove your selfe; for by this meanes the reproofe which our lord makes of sinners, may be remoued from you; which reproofe of his, would be farre greater, the we know how to imagine. For who can reach to vnderstand eyther the riches of the goodnes of God, or our faultes, and miseries? I beseech our lord giue vs light from heauen, where with to see these two *abysses*, which are soe different; that soe the sight of our wickednesse dismay vs not but that we may be cōforted

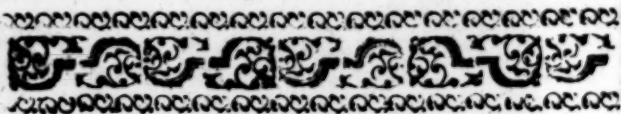
by meditating vpon the goodnes of our lord. For otherwise the stoutest gallant vpon earth might say well enough, *Cor meum dereliquit me.*
 Ps. 38. *My hart hath failed me*, to see soe many debts incurred by himselfe, both past, and present, besides the danger of such as are to come.

I know not what we should doe with this miserable *thing*, which is called *Our selues*; nor why we will take *Our selues* for our owne, or stand charged with doing what we list. Let vs giue itt to him, who will haue goodnes to tolerate it, and wisdom to conduct and cure it. And certainly our lord would thereby vndergoe the weight, as a man may say, of a heauy end vsufferable burden, if his loue were not incomprehensible. It is a great help towards our denyeing of our selues, when we consider that we are our owne enemies: and our very being soe miserable, may well serue to keepe vs from being so couetous, to enioy our selues; and to make vs cast our selues away, and turne our selues out of house, whatsoeuer it cost vs. And yet the trūpet of the diuine goodnes, soundes this out in our eares, that *Dauid* goes forth into the field, as being persecuted without any fault of his; and that the poore people, who were much in debt, and such as were in anguish, and bitterness of heart, ioyned themselves to him. Blessed be our lord *Iesus*, Amen: who is soe rich, and patient in goodnes; that his father thought fit to trust such poore sheepe as we are, in his handes. But that which is

lamentable, is, that we are soe blinde withall,
that he, begging that we will be his, and bin-
ding himselfe to be ours vpon that condition,
yet woe woe be to vs) we still resolue to seeke,
Quæ nostra sunt, non quæ Iesu Christi. Those thinges
which are our owne, and not these things of Christ
our lord. And we will needes possesse our selues
still, without any reason at all, but onely
through blinde affection, and without once
resolving to trye, how sweet, how iust, and
how profitable a thing it is, to belong enti-
rely to Christ our lord: and to walke in the
way of his holy will. Christ our lord giue
you light in all, Amen: and be wholly with
you.

I. Cor
13.





*A Letter of the Authour to a great man,
his freind, who entred into the state
of Religion in the Society
of Iesus.*

HAuing vnderstood of the chaunge which you haue made, I haue giuen many thanks to the immense bounty of our lord, who hath so earnestly taught you, soe mercifully found you, and so powerfully conducted you thither, where without any impediment of other employments, you may present him with your whole hart, for a quiet & peaceable habitation, wherein he may conuerse, and take delight, as he vses to doe with his elect. These are not sleight fauours; nor must wee passe them ouer, without particular acknowledgment, and gratitude. For this, I should to be that sacrifice, which our lord expressely requires, in recompence of his fauours and for want thereof, he hath deprived verie many, of those which formerly he had imparted.

Soe much more, must you haue a care of this,

as the fauour was greater : through the great dangers which threatened you, by reason of the greatenes of your person, & the many employments which accompanied you, in the world. And therefore, as our lord hath not performed a lesse act, in giuing you light, that so leauing all things, you may goe in pursuit of him, then he did, in fauour, of the three *Magi*, whome he enabled by a *starr*, to doe the same : you must be sure, to adore God, & to spread your self all prostrate vpon the ground, acknowledging your owne *nothing*, before that high Maiesty, and giuing him thanks, from the very bottome of your hart, for the fauour you haue receiued: and offering your self as an euermlasting present to him, whose you are by so many Titles. As for me I esteemed it not for one of the least, that he hath vouchsafed to seeke the *lost childe* and that he hath placed him, in the rancke of them, who are most honoured in his house and all this, through his owne onely goodnes.

What hart is there in the world, which would not melt into tendernes, by the consideration of such a fauour as this : to see himsele preuented by such a hand, and so as if the question, and doubt had beene, whether God's mercy, or our misery should preuaile : but he hath mightily, & happilly ouercome. And not being contented to send vs messengers, both within, and from without, himsele takes vs by the hand, like another *Lott* : and drawes vs out of the place of danger, vp the hill, where wee may be saued.

Gen. 19

Doe not you forget this *going out of Egypt* ; for it is a certaine thing , where many wonderfull things of God are seene. And this departure of ours , is not obtayned for vs , but by the bedding of the bloud of the *lambe* , which hath cryed out , before the Father , with desire that it may bee applyed to our soules , Cleansing them from all earthly appetites , and consecrating them wholly , to the desire of his diuine *loue*. Christ our Lord hath beene heard , whilest he was praying for you , as wee may very well beleue ; Giuing this *stone* to his *Father* , that so , of *vilde* , and *basse* , he may make it *precious* ; and that it may bee sett and worne in the *head* of Christ our Lord , as a fruite of those great afflictions , which hee endured , for the good of soules. Great was that warre , and hee conquered therein ; for he giues soules to his Father , who may runne after him , and adore him ; *vi , victis manibus post illum currant.*

Prepare your selfe to receiue our Lord , since you are redeemed by him : you are already belonging to him : you are the *spoyle* of his victory , a piece of lande you are , which is come to him by lott , that he may cultiuate , and water it , and make it fruitfull. O how happy are you , if you can but valesw your owne happynes , and consider from whence , and through whome , it hath proceeded. Beseech him , that since he hath done you soe much fauour , without all de-

sert of yours ; his goodnes , may neuer permit , that your hart should serue any but him ; nor your eyes behould any other beauty , then the beauty of God , who hath beene so good to you. A great burden it is , which herein , they haue Layd vpon you , in exchaunge of those many other burdens , whereof they haue eased you. For now , you are growne a deepe debtor , of a most profound , internall loue ; and of diligent seruice , to that Lord , who hath eased you of all those other obligations : and *given you the speede , of a stag whenewith to runne in his wayes.* Thinke you vpon this , and bee thankfull for this. And since you are as poore , towards paying , as you were vnworthy towards receiuing ; you shall make an act of renounciation of all your goods , into the hands of our Lord. Beseeching him , that he will accept you all for his ; and soe take you vpon his owne accompt , to serue himselfe of you , according to his owne gust ; and desiring that he will dispose of you , as shall please him best.

I beleue , I haue already sayd too much , to a soule to which our Lord is already speaking. For to such soules , all humane discourse is accounted tedious , and troublesome , and it hath reason to be soe. But the ioy , which , in our Lord , I haue conceited ; and the commandment which you sent , that I should write , haue beene the reasons of this letter. I beseech that soueraines goodnes ,

Abel.

3.

which hath already vouchsafed you soe much fauour, that, to his owne eternall glory, hee may finish the good worke which it hath begunne.

You see in what fashion I am talking to you. I haue layd aside those *Titles* of honour, and rancke, which, according to the stile of the world, (now forsaken by you) belonged to your quality. And I write, as to one, who is already estranged wholly from the world; and in soe playne a manner, as is conuenient to a domestick seruant of Christ our lord, and as is fitt for the *Institute* whereof you are. And since your selfe desired it, and I haue obeyed you in it; be carefull, that, now when you haue abhorred the *Tytles* of this world, you may also abhorre the affections thereof; and that now you may passe wholly on, into that age, *cuius pater Christus est*, whose father is Christ our lord. Which consists not soe much, in whether the time, be *present* or *future*, as itt doth in *Spiritt*, which cometh after *flesh*. For as the Apostle saith, *non prius quod spirituale, sed quod animale*, That is not first which is spirituell; but that which is animal. And therefore the spirituell is called, *seculum futurum* a future age.

Esay 9.

1. Cor.
15.

Soe much the more care must you take of this, as it will be more hard for you, to doe it, since he who hath most to leaue, doth it with most difficulty. And the man who

hath most impediments, is least able to runne lightly away. And this is the good which they gett, who are the great men of this world, though they come not to knowe it, till they putt themselues to runne, after others, who are before them. And then the faster he runnes, the more he shall feele it. And by his owne experience, he will be able to vnbeguild himselfe, in that which the world beleiu-
es. Namely, *that it is better to be great, then meane,* and poore. And soe I beleiue, it hath happened to you, if indeede you haue begun to follow Christ our Lord; or at least will finde it, when you shall begin.

The thing which must comfort you herein, is this, That, since our Lord vouchsafed to take you for his seruant, when you were most vntoward, & vncapable thereof, hee will giue you greater strength, wherewith to serue him now, then hee would haue giuen to another, who had not beene soe incapable. And soe must you represent your selfe before our Lord, who hath called, and accepted you; beseeching him, that howsoeuer it may putt you to more payne, and shame, he will yet bestow that vpon you, whereby you may serue him much, since you owe him much. And consider your selfe, as a person who bringes but halfe that meanes, wherewith to negotiate this busines, which another bringes. And begg pardon, for ill employing euen your little stocke, but yet with giuing thanks

to our liberall lord, whose workes are great, towards his poore creatures. That soe liuing with feare, and trembling, to see your selfe soe vnworthy of such a place, there may grow from thence, a due reuerence to all your neighbours; carrying them vpon the toppe of your heade, and doing for them, as any slaue would doe for his lord, considering how mercifully Christ our lord, hath done the same to you, you may haue good hope, to proue well in your great busines, if you obtaine that *knowledge of your selfe*, whereof I haue spoken. And then shall you spend your life happily, when you should euery daye thereof, to be the last. Christ our Lord bee with you. Amen.



A Letter of the Authour, to some Disciples which he had in the Citry of Ezija.

THE peace of our Lord Iesus Christ be euer with you Amen. Since I parted from your presence, I haue euer had you all present with me, in my memory, for the loue I beare you, permits me not to doe otherwise. Giue your selues still to God, since you once gaue your selues to him, and I was a witnes thereof, nor will I by any meanes, that you repent the hauing offered yourselues to him, since hee offered himselfe to death for you. You shall be sure to haue battailles, and those sharp enough: for our enemies are in great multitude, and full of rage. Bee not therefore negligent, for if you be, you are instantly vndone. If they who watch best, haue enough to doe, to defend themselues; what doe you thinke will become of wretchlesse persons, but that they should entirely bee ouercome?

Remember that the pleasure which sinne presents is small, filthy, and shorte; and the sorrow which it leaues behinde is very great, and the misery which growes to vs thereby, is incomparably greater. What sorrow (how great soeuer it be) can equal that which wee ought to conceiue, vpon our losse of Almighty God? O misery, which should make vs tremble, even in hearing it named! For if we delight in sinne, we

shall haue noe part in God. Let vs therefore consider, how we liue, for we shall shortly be led before the Throne of God, to giue account of our selues. Let not the vncleanes of the flesh, nor the vanitie of the world, nor the subtilty of the deuill, deceiue vs. But let vs behould Christ our Lord, vpon the *Crosse*; and we shall see him tormented in his body, & dishonoured by the world, & that soe he subdued the deuill.

Who euer looked towards Christ our Lord, and was deceiued? Infallibly there was neuer any. Let vs therefore neuer draw our eyes of from him, vnlesse we meane to turne blinde. Let it neuer seeme to him, that wee valew his loue soe little; as that, although he died for vs, we cannot find in our harts, soe much as to bee looking towards him. For he died for this, that wee by looking vp to him, might striue to dye to our sinnes. Let therefore our *ould man* die in vs, since our *new man*, who is Christ our Sauiour, died for vs vpon the *Crosse*. Let vs approach towards his wounds; for by his, wee shall be cured of ours. And if wee thinke it a heauy thing, to part from our sinnes; it was much more hard, and heauy for his soule to part from his body, when he died, to the end that wee might euer liue.

Let vs therefore goe on apace, & take hart to follow such a captaine as this; who leades vs the way not onely in *doing*, but in *suffering*. Let vs crucifye our flesh with him, that now wee may noe longer liue according to the desires of

the *flesh*, but of the *spirit*. If the world shall persecute vs, let vs goe hide our selues in his holy woundes; and there wee shall finde those iniuries, as delightfull to our harts, as any musicke is sweete to the eare. And soe rude stones will be to vs, as pretious Iewels; and prisons, will be pallaces; and death it selfe, will be conuerted into life. O Iesus Christ, and how strong is that loue of thine? and how truly doth it couert all things to our good as S. Paule saith; Infalibly that man shal neuer die of hunger, who is fed by this loue of thine. He shall feelee noe nakednes, he shall neuer finde want of any thing, which this world can giue. For, possessing God by loue, noe good thing can be wanting to him.

Let vs therefore, O my beloued brethren, be taken with a great desire of going to see this *vision*, of the *bush*, which burnes and yet is not consumed. That is, how they who loue God, suffer iniuries, and yet feelee them not; how in the midst of hunger, they are full fed; how they are cast of by the world and yet afflict not themselues thereat, how they are assaulted by the fire of fleshly appetites, and yet they are not scorched by it. They are trodden vnder foote, and yet they stand fast vpright; they seeme poore, and they are rich. They seeme deformed, but they are full of beauty. They seeme straungers, but they are citizens. They are not knowne to men, but they are familiarly acquainted with Almighty God. All

Exod 2

this, and more, is brought to passe, by the noble Loue of our lord Iesus Christ in the hart where it is lodged. But noe man can arriue vnto this, vnlesse *he put of his shoes*, that is to say, his *unmortified affections*, which spring yp out of *selfeloue*. For this is the root of death, as the loue of God, is the cause of life. A life, which is spirituall & holy, admixts to weare *noe shoes*, that is to say noe desires of selfeloue. He who loues Christ our Lord, must abhorre himselfe. He who will not be cruell to Christ our Lord, lett him not be cōpassionate to himselfe. They who dandle themselves, shew vnkindnes to Christ our Lord, and they who take soe much care of themselves cannot make God their businesse.

Let vs therefore giue, our *All that which we are* (which God knowes is but *a little All*) for that other *great All*, which is Almighty God. Let vs giue ouer the following of our owne proper will, and let vs betake our selues with diligence, to follow the will of God. Let vs esteeme all things as *meer dung*, that soe wee may possesse that *pretious pearle*, which is Christ our Lord. And to the end that we may see him, in his beautv and glory; let vs heere be content to embrace dishonour, & labour.

Infalibly, he shall neuer finde himselfe deceiued, who makes such an exchaunge as this. But when God shall come with his Saints, and shall come to reward euery one according to his workes, then will that appeare to haue

beene foolery which now is held in soe great account; and then it will be their turne to lament, who now shall haue spent their mortall liues in delight. And he only will be avowed by Christ our Lord, who shall haue liued; according to his holy will. O how great, shall the ioy of good men bee, at that day, when receiuing high honour at the hands of God, they shall be seated vpon those thrones which were prepared for them from all eternity; and when in society of all the quires of Angels they shall sing prayse to their Lord, and their God? O how great will their ioy be, *who shall behould the king in his beauty.* In the contemplation whereof, they will be soe happy, that noe one of them shall bee without euen regorging, through his being soe full of that pretious liquour, and that soueraigne *Balsamum*; which created all good things. In comparison of this, all beauty is deformity: & the very brightnes of the sunne it selfe is direct downe-right darknes; & the very topp of other delights, is the very bitternes of gall. And, in fine, (that I may not reckon vp euery particular thing by it selfe) in comparison of this beauty, all the things of the whole world put together are not to be esteemed for any thing at all, neither are they *any thing* in very deede. O eternall God, thou who art all things, and yet who art none of these things, and when shall that day atriue, wherein we may bee soe happy as to see thee? when is this earthen pott to be cracked, which shuts vs vpp, from enioying soe great a good. When

shall theefe chaines be broken, which hinder vs from flying vpp to thee, who art the true repose, of such, as are to repose indeede? Let vs not, my Brethren, looke any other way but onely vpon Almighty God. Let vs call vpon him, in our harts, and let vs keepe him close imbraced by vs: that soe hee may neuer part from vs. For woe be to vs, wretched thinges; what shall wee be able to doe, without him, but onely to turne againe into our *nothing*. Let vs, now at last, cast this world behinde vs, which yet, wee carry before our eyes; and let vs, at last beginn to trye, how sweete our Lord is. Let vs runn after him, who came running downe towards vs; from heauen it selfe, that he might carry vs thither. Let vs goe to him, who cals vs; and who doth it with soe much loue, from the topp of that *Crosse*; with his flesh all torne, and euen as it were broyled with the fire of loue, to the end that it might be more sauoury to our taste. O that we might feede thereon? O that we might euen consume thereby? O that we were all transformed? O that wee could growe, to be one, and the self-same *spirit* with God.

Who is he that detaines vs? who is he that hinders vs? who is hee that deceaues vs soe, as that wee cannot perswade our selues to draw neare to God? If it bee our *goods*, let vs cast them away, if they be in our power, if they bee not, let vs keepe them, though onely as soe much dunge, which may bee layd vp with diligence, for good vses: but yet still without any loue

at all to the thing it selfe. If it be our *wines*, *S. Paule* lets vs know, *that wee must haue wines, as if wee had them not.* If it be our children let vs loue them, but for the loue of God. And let vs euen out of water bee able to kindle a fire, whereby all that may be burnt vpp, which shall pretend to deuide vs from Almighty God. Let the teares of greife wash vs; and the fire of loue consume vs, and soe wee shall growe to be those holy creatures which were offered vpp to God with fire.

O eternall God, whose cōsumest our couldnes; and how sweetly, doest thou burne, and how dearely doest thou inflame, and how delightfully doest thou consume vs? O that wee all might altogether burne with thee? *Then would all our powers cry out, and say: O Lord who is like to thee? For who soeuer bee bee, that sayth he knowes thee, and yet loues thee not, is a liar.* Lett vs therefore loue thee, and let vs alsoe knowe thee, since loue growes from that knowledge. And afterward make vs able to possesse thee; since they who possesse thee, are soe rich, and possessing thee, let vs be possessed by thee, and soe let vs employ our selues, in praying thee; *since all the powers of the heauens confesse and prayse thee, for God Trine and One, the infinit king, wise, powerfull, good, and beautifull, the pardoner of them who are conuerted towards thee, & the vphoulder of them who approach to thee; & the glorifier of them who serue thee; & that God, of whose perfectiō there is noe end*

For thou surpassest all tongues, and all vnderstandings; and thou art onely knowne in perfection, by thy selfe. To thee be glory, through the eternities of all eternities. Amen.

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*A Letter of the Authour, to a Canallier, who went to study at Salamanca, where they made him Rector of the Vniuersity. Hee shewes, that in the busines of seruing our Lord, saynt desires are not sufficient, but there must bee deeds. Hee also shewes the hurts, which multiplicity of busines brings, to such as are but beginning to serue God.*

**I** Pray God, that both your going to that Vniuersitie, your aboad there, and your retourne from thence, may be happy to you: you knowe already, that in this affaire of seruing Christ our Lord, it is not enough to haue certaine faint desires, but they must be accompanied with solide workes; and sometimes with sweat, euen as it were of bloud. And I much feare, least the difficulty of the way, should fright you, and least you might grow to loose the sweete of the kirknell, because the skinne, and shell, is bitter. *The gate is strait, whereby wee must enter into the way of God, but after wee are entered, wee finde that to be true by experience which is written.* *Ducam te per semitas equi-*

*tatis, quas cum ingressus fueris non ardeabuntur gressus tui.* I will leade thee, by the wayes of equity; into which when thou shalt bee entred, thy paces shall not bee straitned. And then a man findes, that the yoke of Christ is not heauy to him, since he reaches now his hād to thē, who haue suffered temptations for his sake: and he comforts them who are in teares, and cures them who haue broken harts. A happy affliction is that (though noe other comfort did succede it) which is endured by vs, because wee hould the standart of Christ our Lord vpright, resolving rather to endure the sharpe blowes of temptation, then to enioy an ill peace, and to haue warre with God.

You must humble your selfe much before our Lord, and lament your owne misery, in the sight of his mercy. For there is not meanes, whereby any good may come to vs, but onely by the fauour of heauen. And there is noe way to obtayne this fauour, but onely the profounde knowledge of our misery; crying out from the very bottome of our harts to that lord, who dwells on high; and driues not such persons from him as are ouerwrought with the burden of their miseries; and who euen swelt, in the lake, (as the Prophet *Jeremy*, saith) with a weighty stone vpon their backs.

I like well, that you resolute to make acquaintance with those *Fathers*. For that good opinion which they of your Citty doe now conceiue of them, that haue I conceiued long



agoe. Onely you are to looke, that the good example which you see in others, may not be vnprofitable to you. And I beseech our Lord, that he will be pleased to lett mee passe a little that away, though it be but to giue contentment to you.

The excuse which you make, for hauing accepted the *Rectorskip of the Vniuersitie*, is iust, since you were aduised to it by persons soe well qualified, and soe many as that they did euen oblige you to it. But I beseech you Sir, be not negligent, now that you are putt to sea; since it was not without cause, that you feared, euen soe much as to imbarke your self. For my parte, I am full of thought, least our aduersary haue traced out this course, soe to hinder your proceeding, in the way to God, which you were taking. For many employments ( though euen about good things ) should not be committed, to young beginners; because they vse, to trouble such persons, as haue not yet sett all those things in order which concerne themselves. And soe our Aduersary hath done much hurt to many, by this meanes, and brought them to the passe of some poore little swallow, which goes forth to fly before she is well in strength; and then hauing not power, to prosecute her flight vp aloft, nor yet to retourne to her nest from which she went, shee falls downe into the hands of boyes; and they play with her a while, and then kill her.

This busines is soe much the more subtile, &

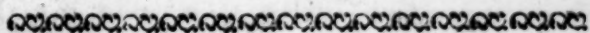
perplexed, as it comes cloaked with good zeale. And new beginners, must be watchfull in this case, little lesse then they would be, when there were question of their comitting a sinne. For if there be any true zeale in them, it is fitt that first they be zealous of their owne good. And zeale of others, which wants zeale of a man's self, hath beene the fearfull ruine of many soules. I desire that you will conceiue a very great feare, & care, in those things, which may seeme good, to you. For in such cases as those, doth that *deuill*, who is called *Meridian*, deceiue them at *high noone*, whome he was not able to deceiue, in expresse darknes. And doe not precipitate your self, vpon the making of great reformations; nor conceiue, that you are there, for that purpose, but rather feare, least it be for the punishment of your owne sinnes. And if your hart offer to giue you, that you shall doe great matters in this *Office*; beleiue it not; but rather lay it prostrate before our Lord, with feare; beseeching him to keepe it still, & that he permitt you not to loose the little, which he hath giuen you, of the knowledge of himself. And if yet indeede, you must execute any thing, let it not be till first, you haue recommended it earnestly to our lord; and let it not be of that nature, ( through the difficulty thereof ) as that you must probably thinke, it is like to cost your minde much vnquietnes; and in the end, that the profit will be vncertaine. Some other man may doe those things, or els your self, at

*Psal.*  
90.

Matth.  
23.

some other time. But now, looke you into your owne soule, consider your wayes well, and direct your feete rightly in them. And because you *haue little oyle in your lampe*, answere them thus who shall desire oyle of you, *Ne forte non sufficiat nobis, & vobis. I can spare you none, for perhaps there is not enough, for vs both* And with this religious feare, euen in those things which are good; and with calling vpon our Lord from your hart, and with plying your study hard, you may perhaps goe through this dangerous passages, without harme. I beseech Christ, by the meritt of his blood, to graunt you this fauour. Amen,





*A Letter of the Authour to a lady, wherein he tells her that of all those things which a body might choose for the seruice of God, the suffering for his loue is the most high and safe.*

**M**Adam, In this so greate hast which our life is making to leaue vs, it is but reason that we make election of that, which may be best for our addresse in the seruice of Christ our lord; and to put it in practise, with diligence, least otherwise, we may haue cause to repent our selues, for not hauing beene faithfull seruants to that lord, whoe hath beene so faithfull to vs, and at whose hands wee expect that hee will be soe still. There are many things in this life, wherevpon we may cast our eyes; since God hath giuen vs libertie: that soe we may lay hould either vpon this, or that. But amongst soe many, what shall wee choose? Shall it paraduerture be *pleasures*, which passe away like smoake, and which leaues ten tymes as much affliction behinde them as they brought delight? Or shall it perhapps be the dung of *riches*, which is wont to blinde the eyes of the owners, and which makes the entrance into heauens gate, soe hard? Madam, there is noe looking towards any thinge of this life with hope that it will make one happy. For though a man possessed them all, they would serue him but for an

*Ecc. 15.*

*Mat. 9*

Eccles. 1.

affliction of spirit, and for an impediment to his proceeding; and in fine, *it is vanitie of vanities: and all vanitie.*

Happy therefore is hee, who remoues his eyes, from that which makes such haste to passe away, and who places them vpon that, which neuer ends, and where delight is pure, and true, because it is taken in *truth* it selfe, which is God. And where the treasures are certaine, since they all consist in enioying him, who alone, suffices to enrich his possessors with inestimable beatitude.

But now to the seruice, of this God, there are many seuerall wayes and some carry an affection to one, and some to another, euery one according to his inclination. Some like the actiue life, and others the *contemplatiue*. Some excell in *abstinence*, others sett vp their rest vpon *Chastitie*. And soe wee see, that diuers Saints haue flourished, with seuerall vertues, and gifts of God. But Madam, amongst all the things of this world, wherein our lord may bee pleased by vs, let vs make choise of *suffering* for his loue: for this is both most high, and most safe. And this did the Maister of truth, whoe is Christ our lord, teach vs, when coming into the world, he principally exercised himselfe in this, and to this, he hath inuited vs. This is a pointe of securitie, and not a thinge made of dust, or strawe. For it is not of conformitie with our sensualli-

tle, but of contrarietie therevnto. And onely the loue of *Iesus*, is able to make affliction fauour well in our mouthes; and he alone is sufficient to make vs encounter, and embrace that, which of it selfe is vnpleasant, and driues men from it.

What did it signifie that *Moyse* seeing a serpent before him, grew into feare and beganne to flye: but that men, who considering what they suffer actually, or els foreseeing what they are to suffer, are frightened, and would not onely suffer it but not soe much as see it. But God commaunded, that he should returne to that, from which he had fled, and not onely returne, towards it, but to take it vp into his hand. And he, obeying the voice of God, founte in those hands, noe more now a serpent, to bite him, but a staffe to support him. Thus doth it dayly happen to men, who in their afflictions obeying the will of our lord who sends them, and taking them into their hands, that is to say, taking hold of the occasions which are offered, and accepting them with obedience, that they finde noe such discomfort, or disquiet, as is wont to weary the soule with complaining, butt comfort, and support, and strength: Confiding, that since God sendes them tribulations, he will place himselfe neere about them, according to his promise: and that he lodges his loue in them, since he

*Erod. 4*



treates them like his beloued children, and as he hath treated as many freindes as euer he hath had, in this world.

Rom. 5.

*Thus doth tribulation breede patience and patience, is the prooffe of that loue, and faith, which we haue in Christ our lord, And this patience workes hope, because God hath promised to make them participate of his glory, whoe are participant of his Crosse. And thus doth tribulation turne into a staye, and staffe to our weakenes, because it makes vs confide in our lord more and more; and it takes from vs that kinde of vnquietnes and complayning; which, affliction, was formerly wont to giue vs, like a kinde of seruant. Be you therefore well aduised, by making choice, of that which is pleasing to God, and be not one of them; whome the*

Heb. 5.

Apostle S. Paule reprehends saying. It was reason that you should haue growne greatespiritually Maisters, after soe long a tyme, wherein you had serued God; and yet you still continue but very babes, whoe haue neede of new instruction, in the principles of those things, which concerne God, and you are rather fitt to sucke milke, then to eat the breade with the crust, which is the foode of such as are growne stronge.

Madam, you must consider, that that scholler doth not please his Maister, who hauing beene taught a thing at many seuerall tymes, is still as grosse, and rude, as at the first. And that phisitian growes weary, who findes that he

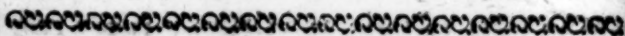
giues noe helpe, through the patients fault, by some receipt of phisick, which he hath ministred often. And soe our lord is not pleased, that we should still continue in taking the milke of comforts, and delights; but that we should runn nimble towards him, although it could not be done, without passing the pikes: and that the fire of our loue must consume whatsoever shall stand before vs: since there is nothing which it imports vs soe much to haue, as *loue*; And this *loue* cannot receiue soe good a *prooffe*, as by tribulation and paine.

Now whosoever loues Christ our lord, should not desire to be without some tryall, or *prooffe*, whether indeede he loue him, yea, or noe. And though that *prooffe* may paine one much, yet it giues him cōfort, to perceiue, *That God hath examined him with fyre, and that he hath not found wickednes in him*; and that it made him not turne backe, from the enterprise which he had in hand. A great honour it is to stand constant, in that which much troubles vs; and we cannot yeild a seruice to God which pleases him better, then when with a very willing hart, we be afflicted for his sake: and when wee drinke that chalice in his company, who drinke so deeply of it, for vs. Vpon this you must place your eyes, since God is pleased to choose this meanes, whereby to bring you vptowards him. Doe not turne coward, in fighting the battailes of the generous loue of the celestiaall kinge; nor hould you any tyme to be well im-

Psa. 16

ployed, but that, wherein you suffer something, for your *beloued*, which alone, ought to giue you comfort, and ground, to thinke that you loue our lord. For, as for other things, though you should be taken vp to the third heauen, you knowe not, whether you loue your selfe therein, or him. For perhaps it is but the delight, in hauing that fulfilled which you desire: and not purely, because that is done, which is pleasing to God.

And since you are already dedicated to the loue of God, and are redeemed by him, see that you still be doing your duty exactly well, that soe like a good huswife, you may appeare at the day of iudgment all rich with loue; and euen cut in pieces in this warre, after the imitation of Christ our lord, who dyed in this battaile by the hands of *loue*. Inuiting as many as loue him, to suffer of that which he suffered, and to answer with loue to his loue; and being ready to giue himselfe, as an eternall reward, to them who passe through these amorous afflictions for his sake: and your ladyship shall be one of them, by the greate mercie of him, who hath made election of you, for this purpose.



*A Letter of the Authour, to a Canallier his freind,  
who was sicke, and desired to enter into Religion.*

*The Authour shewes, that the carrying of the Crosse, in the company of Christ our Lord, is exercised best in sicknes, when it is borne with patience, He also defends the Fathers of the Society of Iesus, aduising him also to esteeme them, the rather, because he had beene instructed by them.*

**Y**OU doe well, in being contented to serue, in that house of our great Lord, in the Office of being sicke. For to passe from *doing*, to *suffering*, is a signe, that Christ our lord aduances his seruants, & raises them from belowe the staires, to attend aboue. Certainly, there is nothing in this exile of ours, which is soe fitt for vs, as to carry the *Crosse*, in company of our lord, who did soe loue it, & who, for loue, dyed vpon it. Now this is better exercised, in sicknes, which is soe vnfauioury to flesh and bloud, and which cannot cause vain glory in the patiēt; then in health, how well soeuer it be employed.

Great were the workes, which Christ our Lord performed in this mortall life; but in his *suffering*, he exceeded them all, & all the world; That soe wee might vnderstād, what the Apostle S. Iames saith, Brethren, esteeme it as a reason of supreme ioy, to see your selues in many afflictions. And the same Apostle saith, that the worke of patience, is perfect. Soe that, you must be gratefull to our lord, for hauing sent you sicknesse; and if you beare this *Crosse*, & burden well, he may perhaps aduāce you to the carrying of others, which are

S. Iames  
1.

more interiour, and irkesome, and which he prouideð for such alone, as are his nearest freinds; that so they may comforme themselves to him, whose *Crosse* was extremely great, euen in that which was to be seene; but incomparably more extreame, in that part thereof, which was inuisible. And though it may seeme to you, that God hath taken away your other *Offices* or imployments, because you gaue him not a good account thereof; yet forbear not to be thankfull to him, who hath ordered the matter, as now wee see. For to be corrected by the hand of such a father, and with soe great loue, puts vs rather into neede of humility, for the moderating of our ioy and comfort, then of patience, wherewith to endure the punishment.

But yet neuertheles, I am in some feare, that perhaps, you may not profit by this feauer of yours. For some beginners, are wonte to giue liberty to the soule, in the infirmities of their body, though yet, they be not such, as threaten daunger or death. It is a thing very contrary to reason, for a man to turne *Poyson*, into *poyson*, and to take occasion of growing worse, by that which was sent a man by our Lord, to make him better. Call therefore vpon him, with your hart. and beseech him, that since he strikes you, *in the strength of your body*, it may be, to make you goe more lightly towards him, with your soule. And forasmuch as this sickness, is sent you, that your body, by the

payue

payne thereof may pay for that sinne which hath beene committed by the same body ; you must not suffer it to be the occasion of your incurring new debts, since it was meant that it should discharge the ould.

You must liue , with great reflection vpon your self : and giue noe credit to flesh and blood in all that which it shall desire of you but offer it to the *Crosse* of our lord , in the company of his owne *holy spirit*. And he, who was content to let his *Crosse* be sided , by the *Crosses* of two murdering theeues, will not driue you from him. And since you cannot now continue, your custome of *meditation*, or *spirituall reading*, as you would , yet faile not to be doing somewhat, the best you can, so that it be without euident disaduantage to your health. For our lord is soe powerfull , and soe good , as that he giues strength to such as haue a mynde to take paines. And sometimes , he bestowes more fauour vpon sick men in theyre beds, who cannot pray; then vpon others , who spend many houres in that holy exercise. And perhaps, he will vouchsafe this mercy to you , since it costs him noe more , then his very will. And I beseech you, for the loue of our lord, *Vt non circumferaris omni vento doctrina*, that you be not whirled about , with euery wynde of doctrine, and that you esteeme of those persons, by whose meanes, our lord hath shewed mercy on you. Imitating the man, who was borne blinde in the ghospell. From whome

Eph. 4.

John. 9



opinion, which he entertained of that person, who had cured him of his continuall blindnes. He tooke that benefitt, for a great token of the goodnes of his Maister, when he sayd, *si peccator est nescio, vnũ scio, quod cum cecus essem, modo video, whether or noe, he be a sinner, I cannot tell: but one thing I knowe, that I who was blinde, doe now see.* And though he said *as we haue heard*, yet he beleiued well, that his Maister, was a iust person, as may appeare by the holy kinde of earnestnes which he vsed towards the Iewes, and besides by our lords making himself knowen to him, in the temple: in reward of that faith which he defended. My selfe haue heard some things, which are said by such as oppose, and emulate those *Fathers*, but I find not yet, that any one of them is grounded vpon reason, neither doe I beleiue, that there is any: but yet I like well, that yet when you defend them, it bee rather with meekenes, and few words, then otherwise. For our lord hath these thinges in great recommandation; and his pleasure is, that they should be carried sweetely and with patience. I beseech our Blessed lord, to remayne with you, since he dyed for you.



*A Letter of the Author to a disciple of his. He treats of the security, which is greater when God is served in the way of affliction, then when, in the way of Consolation.*

I Haue receiued some of your letters, & I haue payed my thanks to our Lord, both for ha- uing giuen you health, and his blessed help withall, to be in fauour with him, continuing that good, which alreadie he had begun in you; and soe you must confide, that he will doe euen to the end, *for his workes are perfect.* This which he will doe for you, is a fauour of his, and noe meritt of yours. Nor will he leaue the care, and gouernment of you in your owne hands; But he, for his glory, will take the bu- sines of your saluation to himselfe. Now this he doth as a most wise Physitian, sometymes by making much of you, sometymes by shewing signes of disgust; giuing you sometymes, the light of comfort, and at other tymes the wor- me-wood of sorrow; Now hyding himselfe from you for the tryall of your *faith*, and then shewing himselfe to you, for the encrease the- reof. And by a thousand other meanes which he knowes how to vse, hee will giue you your soule saued, without, in a manner your per- ceiuing how you come by it, till you haue it.

Be not disordered in your iudgment. eyther

by way of valewing your selfe the more, when you thinke your busines goes well, or yet, on the other side, must you giue sentence of condemnation against your selfe, conceiuing that all is already lost, when you conceiue that you haue reason, to be disgusted with your self. The hart of man is wicked, and cannot be seached, and sifted, but by the wisdome of God himselfe: and to him, and to his iudgment, you must remitt the sentence concerning the case in which you stand. And you must walke on, both with great confidence of his mercy, and with a religious feare, of his high maiesty. Depart neyther to the right hand nor to the left. Doe not belecue that there is any Sanctity at all, where there is any want of this chaste, and holy feare, which makes a man grow hūble. For thereby he knowes, that the good, which he hath, depends vpon another and it makes him hang, as it were, vpon the eares of God, beseeching him with continuall prayer, that though he may, without iniustice depriue him of the good he gaue him, yet that through his goodnes, he will not doe it.

Nor must you beleiue any *Spirit*, which by meanes of any temptations, or Spirituall-discōforts, may come to you: nor yet if any darkenes or anguish, which may be conueyed into your soule, shall pretend to dismay you, or perswade you to disconfidence in our Lord, who loues you. But tell that *Spirit*, that if it had wished you to disconfide in your selfe, it should

haue had all reason, because you are nothing, but meere weaknes. But, in saying that you must not hope for safety at his hands who is the common saluation of all the world: tell him he lyes, and therein you shall but say a truth.

Christ our Lord loues you more then you can thinke: onely it is fitt sometymes, that he hide it from you. For perhaps, if you knew it, you might fall into a greater occasion, and danger of vanity, then the suspection you haue of your not being beloued by him, may be of your despayre; for without doubt they are fewer who can enioy prosperity, without any mixture of vanity, or inordinate delight, in the sweet meates which are giuen them: then there are, who can beare, the bitternes of tribulation, without despaire. Cōceiue you therefore that our Lord, keepes you safe, in the haven of security, vnder the sharp rocke of tribulation: to the end you may not putrify, with too much sweetnes: but be preserued by the bitternes of *myrh*. And at this, you are not to be troubled. For of your self you should make election of that, which will be good for you in Eternity, rather then of that, which may afford you some little temporall gust. Yea and euen in spirituall consolations, we reap not sometymes soe much profit, as we doe delight. Nor will you be demaunded at the last day, what comforts you shall haue enioyed: but what discomforts, you haue suffered, without sayling, eyther in point of *faith*, or *loue*. And beleiue you, that God receiues that for seruice

which being contrary to your sensuality, and selfe will, you did yet accept, as being conquered by his *loue*, and not that which a man how sensuall soeuer he might be, would be glad to enioy. For if to be regaled by Almighty God were to doe true seruice to his diuine Maiesty, he would not haue soe few seruants: since there are soe many, who by this way, & that way, and euery way are seeking comforts. But they vnderstand not, how farre it is from God, to be able to abstaine from comforting his afflicted, and dejected seruants, when it is best for them. And as farr also he is, from liking them, who taking of theire eyes, from his tormenting *Crosse*, send them in search after Comforts as conceiuing that the more they haue thereof, the more beloued, and more happy they are. And they neuer consider, how poore they shall be found, at that day, when God will *sifie Ierusalem with the light of Lampes*, & whē he will call vs to account, whether we loue him from the profoundest part of our hearts, and our selues for him, & in him, and through him: or els whether we haue loued him for our selues, & to our owne vse. And then will many of those workes appeare to haue beene carnall, & infected with, selfe loue, and interest, which shined like soe much fine gould, in their eyes who performed them. You are therefore more secure from interest, or complacence, when such thinges come to you as cause bitterness. But thē let the loue of God alone, perswade you to endure them, till he prouide other-

Soph. I.

wife. In whom you must haue so much strength of the *holy Ghost*, as may make you abound in charity, and peace, and ioy: treading your passions vnder foot, and hauing your soule, euen all enbalméd with grace. Yet when you shall be in ioy, doe not enioy it for your selfe: but employ it with greater strength, vpon him who gaue it: fetching also reason from thence, why it should make your loue encrease.

I beseech that Lord, who remembered you when you forgot him, to giue strength vnto your inward man that soe you may know how, to adore, obey, and loue him; and that he will send his *holy Spirit* into your heart, that it may guide you into that land of Eternall light. Amen.





*A Letter of the Authour, to a Religious woman, a  
spirituall child of his. He shewes that it is noe assu-  
red signe of disfauour, for God to estraunge  
himself sometimes: & that our safety depends  
more vpon his goodnes, then our deserts:  
and he perswades her to haue  
confidence in God,*

I Haue receiued many of your letters since I  
saw you last. And in some of them, you tould  
mee, that your soule was troubled: and in  
others, that our lord had begunne to giue you  
comfort. Yea, and I thinke you sayd, in some  
one of them, that the peace, and comfort which  
formerly you had receiued, was entirely retourn-  
ed. I answered none of those letters, eyther  
because my sinnes hindered mee, from the gra-  
ce of giuing you comfort; or els because I knew  
you had sufficient confidence in mee, without  
receiuing my answeres. But now at last, I re-  
ceiue a letter from you, whereby you tell mee,  
that you are as much afflicted, as euer, if it  
be not rather more; and you desire mee to  
write,

I am in paine, through your paine, and this,  
hath moued mee, to entreate, that for the loue  
of Christ Iesus crucified, you suffer not your  
selfe to be blinded by that darknes, which su-  
perfluitie of sadnes, is wont to drawe ouer our

soules, but remember, how faithfull that lord is, to whom you haue offered yourselfe. And, that it is an vsual thing with his infinit wisdom, to saue the soules of his seruants, by meanes which they cannot reach to vnderstand; hiding his loue from them sometimes: and shewing them a countenance of some rigour; and all this, not because he is cruell, but out of pure, and perfect mercye. Because he knowes that our infirmities are better cured, when wee are layd vnder the scourge of tribulation; then when we are carried vp in the hands of prosperity and comfort.

You tell me that desolation wherein you are, seemes very bitter to you, and that you cannot beare the rigour of that angry face of our lord, which you say he shewes to you, and that absence alsoe from him, wherein you liue. But I tell you, my good sister, that though tribulation may be of as much daunger to you as you declare: yet the state of comfort, is still subiect to as much. *Nay, prosperity*, is much more to be feared, then *aduersity*. For in the former, the soule runnes hazard, to depart from God: but in the latter though it suffer payne, yet that very payne it selfe, incites one to drawe nearer to him. And if you say, that the great weight of discomfort, doth sometimes put the soule in daunger of sinning through impatience, you say nothing but truth. But yet you must knowe withall, that much oftener, and by assaults of greater daunger, the soule is brought into daunger by the

sweetnes of gult.

Remember the Apostle saint Paule, who through the grace of him who was *crucified*, did esteeme it for glory, to suffer the afflictions of the *Crosse*. And though he were *environed by warrs without, and feares within*: yet his soule was safely kept, as in a haven most secure. But soe great was the daunger which he rann by the faire and cleare weather of consolations and *reuelations*; that if God had not permitted him, to be seized vpon by the tempest, both of inward, and outward troubles, which layd such load vpon his neck, as made him stoope, that great Saint might haue beene in daunger, through the occasion of comfort, whom soe many discomforts could not once pluck downe. By this meanes, the *bitter*, was the cure of the *sweete*: and the *Angel of Satan*, was the occasion of benefit to him, to whom that great communication of Almighty God, might haue beene the occasion of falling; if through humane frailty, he had puffed vp himselfe.

If now this might haue happened to that *vessel of election*: and if it were necessary for him to suffer, that soe he might bee freed from the daungers of comfort; how can you meruaile, if God haue watered your ioy with teares: if your harpe be set to sad tunes; and if those sweet communications, which you had before with Almighty God, be turned into such an vnflavoury departure from him. His eyes, are able to

discerne, that, which yours cannot. And hee knowes full well, the vanity of that hart of yours, which would not perhaps, be able to endure the weight of diuine fauours. Or els perhaps he may see, that you are likely to suffer decay of health by the excesse, of the sweetnes, of that diuine gust which he gaue you: Or else, that you esteemed more of your selfe then you did of others, who want these comforts: Or els in fine, it may haue happened, for any one of many other faults, which may haue taken hold of the imperfection of your hart, & which cannot be thoroughly sifted by any, but by that God alone, who made it.

Iere. 17.

Yea and if you should not be, in any necessity, of this kind of phisick (because, though our lord should comfort you still, yet perhaps you were not, to fall into these inconueniences) yet there are many other reasons, why our lord may thinke fit to treat his seruants, after this manner. All which, are grounded vpon his loue to vs; though in the blind eye of flesh and bloud, they may seeme to grow from disfaueur. You know, it is a common saying, *He who loues thee, will make thee cry.* And the holy scripture saith, that *a wound, giuen by a freind is better then the treacherous kisse of an enemy.* And beleue you for certaine, that our lord loues you, and therefore doth he treat you after this manner. For it is written, *our lord pannishes whom he*

Heb. 12.

*loues, and he corrects such a one, as he receiues for his sonne.*

And as in former times, God sent most hideous Martyrdomes to his beloued seruants, by the hands of base and bloudy executioners, ingaging them in bitter warrs, that afterward he might honour them with pretious crownes; soe now, when those exterior Martyrdomes are ceased, he sēdes others which bee interior. And these ( howsoeuer they are not visible ) be yet as great, or greater, then those. For then, men tormented them, and God gaue them comfort; and by the strength of this Omnipotent God; those torments were ouerwrought, and maistered, which were inflicted on them, by weake men. But now, he who discomforts, is our Lord, who hides himselfe; and the Deuils, like cruell executioners, doe by a thousand deuices, torment the minde, which is farr more sensible, then the body. And from that torment, doth many times redound, a torment euen to the very body it selfe. And soe the whole man, both within and without, is layd vpon the discomforts of a *Crosse*. And he sighes, and grones, and askes succour of our Lord. And our Lord, the while, makes himselfe deafe, and is more hiddē from the soule then if there were seauen wals, betweene him and it. Yea and it doth alsoe expressly feelee, that our Lord hath absented himselfe from it; and that, not onely in the way of not doing it any fauour, but rather expressly seeming, to disfauour it. As he proceeded with the *Cananean*, when, at the first, he did but forbear to answeare, but af-

Matth.

15.

terward, he compared her to a dog.

That indeed is an hower, of mighty anguish, when the soule findes noe repose, in any thing, to which it can apply it selfe. As when a man is drowning, in a profound sea, without finding soe much, as any little rest for the feete. Or like one, who is bound fast, hand and foot, and would faine rise vp, but knowes not once how to stirr. For as he, who is highly comforted by Almighty God, cannot be discomforted, by any paine, or torment, soe can nothing comfort him, who is discomforted by Almighty God. And yet must these seruants, goe after their lord; through such a desert as this, which is euen a very image of death, and by such darknes, and distresse, they must passe on, to the place of rest.

This Martyrdome I say, must be endured, for loue of the *Spouse*, by that soule, which desires to carry, the *Embleme of Loue* in her hart; and amongst these thornes shee must make her nest, if shee will be conforme to her Head, who was crowned with thornes. And these draughts must shee swallow downe; & into these sweates must shee bee cast who resolues to keepe that Lord company, who, being in fierce agony vpon that *holy Thursday* at night, did sweate drops of blood, from his whole body, in testimony, that his soule, was truly sad, euen to the very death.

Did you thinke perhapps, that it was some dainty and delightfull thing, to serue Christ



our Lord ? or that you vndertooke some trifling busines , when you began to place your loue on him ? They who fight the battailes of loue , *must dye dayly* , as S. Paule did. And they must bee euen cruell , against themselves , ( as a man who were carelesse of soe many base and broken pots ) to the end , that they may neuer faile of fidelity to the Loue of our Lord. Which Loue , was neuer complied with well by any , who was eyther *negligent* , or *inconfident*. For the *former* of these two , seekes his owne *Regalo* , whereas it were his part , to seeke the contentment of his beloued. And the *latter* , faints in his loue , because he cannot beleieue that he is beloued. But *Faith* being ioyned to *Obedience* , frees vs from such mischeiues as these ; making vs beleieue that God loues vs , and then most , when he most hides his loue from vs ; and when he seemes to be most rigourous , and cruell towards vs. For the condition , and property of *true faith* , is to beleieue not onely vpon those signes , and pawnes , which may be giuen ; but as well , without them ; and not onely without them , but euen against them. And herein , it doth but resemble euery other *vertue* , which then declares best of what strength and beauty it is , when it is put on , by the fewest helps ; and when it is encountered , by the greater impediments.

That is true *loue* , which loues a person , who euen deserues not to bee beloued. And

that is true *Patience*, which suffers impertinences, and endures wrongs. And then doth *Chastity*, deserue a rich, and gallant crowne of glory, when in despight of seuerall temptations, it standes fast. And soe, you must learne to know, the true valew of true *faith*, which beleiueth and puts confidence, in the truth, and goodnes of God, against that distrust, or despaire, which humane reason, or the senses of flesh and bloud, might pretend to cause. By this *Faith*, wee see that which is inuisible, how deepe soeuer it be hidd. And euen through the midst of these pikes, which are the disfaouours of God, ( the sharpe points whereof we feelee sticking in vs ) wee yet enter, and passe on, into that most retired secret of the hart of our Lord; and there wee finde, that indeed he loues vs, though hee shew vs signes, which looke as if they proceeded from disaffection. And then soe wee esteeme, and vse them, as wee ought, when we take them for the tryal of our *Faith*; and for the exercise of our *Love*; and for the encrease of our *Crowne*; and for *matter*, wherevpon our *Obedience* to God, must worcke.

If you beleieue mee not, I pray you tell me, how shall the chaste woeman be tryed, but by contradictions, and combates against Chastity? And how shall your *Faith* be tryed, but by receiuing these tokens of disfaueur, which pretend to depriue you of confidence.

Be not troubled , to finde that your *Spoule* is thus resolued , to make tryall of your fidelity to him. For this is a very vsuall thing betweene *Sponſes* ; and the fruite thereof vses to be, but an encrease of *loue* ; which it is not fit to keepe idle ; for in our employment, and exercise thereof, doth our life and treasure consiſte. And now God made choice of you, to discharge this office towards him. And if indeed you would exercise it well, it mult be by louing him, though you feeie not your ſelfe to be beloued by him, and by following him, whome you conceiue to be flying from you. For he who loues not but onely when hee finds himſelfe to be beloued, is indeed noe true louer ; but his reſpects, runn all towards himſelfe. And heereby it will appeare , whether you be that true *Cananeſſen* or noe, if when you heare hard language, and be caſt of by our lord ; you doe yet importune him ; and if following him, who flies from you ; and humbling your ſelf to him, who treats you noe better, then ſome baſe , vnreaſonable creature , you doe yet proceede to loue him, as ſincerely , and purely, as if you taſted of great delights, and Regalos, at his hands. For in the end , hee will anſweare you thus , *O woeman , greate is thy faith , let that be done which thou deſireſt.*

But in the meane time be you reſolute , in continuing faithfull ; and ſay to him with your whole hart , *O Lord I will loue thee , though thou ſhouldeſt not loue me. I will ſeek thee , and looke*  
*cheerfully*

*cheerfully towards thee, though thou flye from me. Let me loue thee still: vpon that condition, doe with me what thou wilt.* By this meanes, the disfaouours of our lord, shall be conuerted, into the exercise of true *loue*: and herein you are to remaine more contented; then you are to be in paine, for being disfaououred. Nor shall you onely please our lord by this meanes, but moreouer you will obtaine a crowne in heauen, which will be straungely greate. For by the *measure* of your *discomforts*, that *robe of glory*, is to bee cut out, wherewith you must be vested, in heauen: and *from the seede of teares*, we must gather the *sheaues of ioy*. And we are not to be crowned, for hauing beene in deuotion, and consolation; but for hauing beene (as it were) threshed with variety of temptations, and for hauing beene content, with the taste of such gall, as carried the very image of hell with it, and of the torments thereof: and for bearing all these things, with an equall minde, and for beleiuing that they are light, and few, in comparison of *that superexcellent weight of glory*, which is to be renewed in them, who shall be humbled, and mortified after this manner. And wee must thinke our selues happy, in being obedient to the ordinance of our lord God, not onely, in that which giues vs gult, but in the contrary alsoe. For otherwise, what wonder is it, to see the *sponse*, obey her fellow *sponse*, in that, which giues contentment to her selfe: since for that, there is noe greate neede of *loue*: for the respect

2 Cor. 4.

Matth.  
26.

of proper interest is able to breed such *obedience* as that. Nor doe I know, with what eyes, Christ our lord will looke vpon such a *sponse* as that: since he obeyed his *Father*, for her sake, in cases of soe extreame affliction, saying: *Let it be, not as I wil, but as thou wilt.* Whereas shee saith, iust the contrary; *Not as thou wilt, but as I will*: for shee will be squared out by another rule, then her *head* was: and will needs make *the will of God*, which is eternally good, to be crooked, that it may conforme it selfe to her will: which seekes not that which is truly good for her, and which eternally is to be soe. but that which seemes likely, to giue her, some little temporall delight.

Rom.  
13.

Awake O Virgin, out of that sleepe, wherein you are: for it is broad day. Take the *sheild of Faith*, since God hath armed you with it, and driue away these dismayes, beleeuing, that you are beloued, though you be not *regaled* by our lord. And turne your complaint backe vpon yourself since a little present disfaueur, is of more power, towards the drawing you downe, then the many fauours, which are past, to keepe you fast on foot. You now, doe iust the contrary, of what you should. For whereas it were reason, that in this time of tribulation, you should remember your comforts of former times: beleiuing, that the trouble which now you haue, is but to trye, what proportion of trust, you repose in God: You doe yet call it into question, whether his loue were true to

you then, or noe : beleiuing rather in the shew, and leafe, then in the substance, and roote,

You haue noe iust cause to be dismayed, though you bee afflicted. For our lord is not gone from you : but he went away, with a meaning onely to stande by, and to see how you carried yourselfe, like a mother who hides herselfe behind a hanging, to obserue, and heare, what her childe sayth, and doth : whilst he thinkes that he hath lost her, but then shortly shee steps out and makes much of him.

If you feare, that he hath forsaken you, and giuen you a *bill of separation*, for the faults, and ignorances, into which you may haue fallen, you are much deceiued. For in farr greater falls then those, his course hath beene to comfort soules, by saying, *Thou hast committed fornication with many louers : but yet retourne to me, and I will receiue thee.*

Though God like well, that his seruants should know, and weigh the faults, into which they fall ; yet it is not his pleasure, that they should be dismayed, or too excesssiuely afflicted by them. Nay he esteemes this, to be of more seruice to him, then the very fall it selfe. Neither is it alsoe his pleasure, that a sinne which is as little as a graine of seede, should be made by vs, as bigg as an Elephant, and much lesse, that we should make that to be a sinne, wick indeed is none. Soe that if you haue not fallen into sinne, and yet will needs be troubled, as if you had, you offend against his truth, And

*Jerem.*  
3.



if you had fallen, you should offend against his *mercy*, by not beleiuing, that he hath pardoned you. You offend alsoe against his *loue* by suspecting, that he hath forgotten you. And lastly, you offend against the *Crosses*, which he hath sent to you, esteeming them to be messengers, and signes of wrath, whereas indeed, they are effects of his goodnes.

Take therefore the courage, now at last, to fally out, from the owne narrow thoughts; & beleiue of God, according to his goodnes; as it imports his honour, that you should doe. And liue not still, in such blindnes, as to measure the large hand of God, by the rules of your owne poore woefull hart. Nor conceiue you, that now he will be a rigorous iudge, who, at others times, and in your greatest occasions, hath beene, a most indulgent Father to you.

It was not you vpon whome he looked, when he pardoned you, and called you; but he regarded his owne *blood*, which he shedd. Nor doth he now, stand hanging vpon your handes, as if he loued you, for them; but you are placed, and *written in his*, as he sayth, by his Prophet *Isay*. And in those handes, he loues you; and with those handes he guards you, euen then, when you thinke he giues you buffets. But it is his *mercy*, which is your remedye, and safety, and noe meritt of your owne. You are a Daughter, and you are to possesse heauen, by way of inheritance, and not, as a meere day labourer. Confide in

God; and giue him glory, in that he lodges his eyes, vpon ſoe vnworthy a thing as you; and for that he purpoſes, to exalt ſoe baſe a creature, to ſuch height of glory. And know, that he hath noe neede of anything, in you; and that if he deſire anything, it is, but that you may offer him that ſacrifice of praiſe for your owne good; confeſſing him to be your gracious *pardon*er and your piteous *raiſer* vp, from your falls; and your *Centinell* who neuer ſleepes when there is queſtiō, eyther of doing you fauours, or of drawing good out of your *ſinnes*; and your moſt wiſe *conductor*, who carries, and ſaues you, by ſuch pathes, as ſeeme, in the eye of your ignoraunce to be very farr about, or rather quite out of the way. And all this, he doth, through his owne goodnes alone, conſidering what *himſelfe* is. Which carries a greater weight towards your ſaluation, then your wickednes doth, towards your condemnation; and you are bound to beleue that ſoe it is. And it muſt not ſeeme ſtraunge to you, that the *greater*, ſurmounts the *leſſe*: and the *Creator*, the *creature*. But let it ſtand for the laſt concluſion, that as noe goodnes in you, was the cauſe, why God loued, and called you to his ſeruiſe; ſoe will he take care, that your wickednes, and weakenes, ſhall not hinder the courſe of thoſe mercies, which he reſolues to ſhew you, for all eternity. Continue your *Communion*s; and, I beſeech our Lord to giue them his benediction. For my part, I

like well thereof; and vpon the dayes which are sett downe, communicate, from time to time; and God will giue you strength, that it may doe you no hurt: for he hath noe quarrel to you. I beg that he may be your *Loue*, since he is your *Louer*.

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A Letter to a Lady, who was a Religious woman and in great affliction. He shewes how troubles are the prooue of Faith, and Loue, in the seruants of God, and how confident they ought to be of his diuine Maieſty, in the middeſt of their troubles,

AS ſoone as I receiued your letter, I offered thanks to our Lord, for hauing giuen you a ſigne, that your vocation came from his hand, and this ſigne is, that you haue ſuffered tribulation. You muſt not be a little gladd of this, ſince our Lord loues you. Nor yet muſt you be ſlacke, ſince you are in the middeſt of many dangers; but carry your eye towards him, who hath called you with ſo great loue. You muſt alſoe haue a ſtronger harte, For he called you not with intention to giue you ouer in the middeſt of your iourney; but to guide you vnder the protection of his owne wings, till he may haue conducted you to heauen, where you ſhall ſee his face. Let not the faith of Chriſt our Lord, nor the loue you owe him ſleepe in you; for he neuer ſleepes when there is queſtion of doing you any good.

These are tokens which he vses to send, to whome he loues, to try if they alsoe loue him, in their afflictions, and if they confide in him in their dangers: That Spouse is not worthy of thākes, who loues her fellow spouse, but onely when he is present with her; not doth it cost him much to confide in him when she findes her selfe regaled by him. But the matter is, that when he absents himselfe from her, yea and when he seemes to haue forgotten her, she must loue him soe much the better, as he is further absent from her, and confide in him soe much the more; as she hath fewer exterior signes of his fauour.

It is enough for you, my good sister, to haue knowne already by experience, how louing our Lord hath beene to you; by his hauing drawne you to the knowledge of himself. And be you, not crauing new testimonies of his Loue, but making your selfe sure enough thereof, and be not troubled though he correct you; and though it seeme, as if he estraunged himselfe from you and forgott you; but rather say thus; *Hee hath a minde to trye me, and not to oppresse mee.* You must loue our Lord, though he correct you, you must cōfide in him, though you feele noe comfort from him. Seeke him, though he hide himselfe; suffer him not to rest, till you haue waked him, and till he confesse that you are faithfull in his absence. And thus you shall finde him returne to you, with soe much aduantage, as that when you

enjoye his presence againe, you will esteeme your former afflictions well imployed.

Procure greate courage, wherewith to suffer; for after the rate of your sorrows, shall your comforts be. Bee not a louer of your selfe, but be a louer of God; loose your selfe, and soe you shall be sure to finde your selfe. And if once you would but trust God home; and if once you would offer your selfe to him, with true loue there could nothing happen which would fright you. All bitter frozen afflictions proceede but from distrust in God. And for this our Lord said, *Let not your hearts be troubled, and doe not feare. You beleine in God, beleine alsoe in mee.* Soe that *faith* and *loue* is the cause of peace, and quietnes to the hart.

John.
14.

There is noe one thinge, which is soe necessary for you, towards the making you able to arriue at the end of that dayes worke, wherein God hath placed you, as to confide in him with loue. Our lord hath many proofes to make of you, and many tribulations shall growe where you looke least for them; but if you stand armed with *faith* and *loue*, you shall ouercome them all. Doe but remember how the children of *Israell*, when they were issued out of the land of *Egypt*, by the meanes of soe many miracles, and were passing through soe many afflictions, before they arriued at that land, which our lord had promised them, said thus, *The people which possesse this land, is greater and stronger then wee; they haue mightie Citties whose*

Num. 13;

*wallis doe euen threaten the skye we cannot ouercome
such a stout nation as this: to what end doe wee
put our selues vpon this iourney? And though some
amongst them, whoe had faith, did encourage
the rest, by saying that since God was of their
side, they should easily be able to ouercome, as
they had done till then; yet feare preuailed soe
farre, as that they offended our lord thereby,
and through their little confidence, they lost
the land, and God destroyed them in the desert,
without suffering them to enioye that, for
which they had laboured, and which himselve
had promised. Let vs take warning, my good
sister, by the danger of others: and lett vs
know, that our lord hath gust, in such as feare
him, and hope in his mercie; and is offended
with such, as doe not soe. It is he whoe drewe
you out of the captiuitie of Egypt, when he
inspired your hart with a desire of being his:
and hee leades you still, through this desert,
which is soe impleasant: where sometymes
you want the bread of doctrine, for lacke of
such, as might breake it to you: other tymes
you want company which may speake of spi-
rituall things, that soe your way might be ma-
de to seeme the shorter; At other tymes you
want the trees of other recreation, which
might giue you shade: and in steede of these
comodities, you haue a thousand discomforts.
Now temptations rise, against you from with-
in: and then from without; now from stran-
gers, and then from domesticks. But yet attend*

Psal.
147.

you onely to your busines, for he who did that for you, which was *more*, can neuer faile to doe that for you, which is *lesse*. He who made you a freind, of an enemy, will better keepe you now, when you are his freind. He who did not abandon you, when you fled from him, will much lesse fly now from you, when you follow him.

Who is he that can say, with any truth, that God did not helpe him if he were desired? See you haue noe feare o you seruant of Christ, in any thing which may happen to you; but confide in him, who Loued you soe well, as to dye for you. It is true that you haue but one, who protects you, but that one, is of much more power, then all they whoe contradict you. Doe not thinke, of how great the giants, and how stronge the Citties are, which you must encounter, for it is not you, who must fight. *But hold you your peace, and our lord will fight for you.* Doe not fly from the warre, nor abandon your selfe, as one who were ouercome: *and soe you shall see the fauour of our Lord towards you.* For in this warre, he onely looses the battaille, who quitts the feild. It is true that you are weake; *but in that weakenes of yours, God will shew his strength.* It is true that you know not much, but God himselfe will be your guide. By your miseries, God will make his mercies appeare. Whoe are you, that you should be able to passe through such difficulties? but yet say with *Dauid*, *In the strength of my God, I*

Numb.
14.

Exod.
14.

Ps. 124.

will leape over a wall. Who are you that you should be able to fight? but yet say with him againe. Though thousands should rise against me, yet my hart shall not feare. Beleiue, my good sifter, that how much the harder this bulinesse is for you, soe much the easyer is it for Almighty God. And therefore you must haue great distrust in respect of your owne weakenes; but great confidence withall, in God's strength. Infalibly he will crowne you, if you continue in his loue, and if you confide, that by his grace you shall obtaine that Crowne.

Ps. 26.

Forget not this promise of Christ our lord, *him whoe confesses mee before men, that man will I confesse before my father who is in heauen; but him who denyes mee before men, that man will I alsoe deny before my father whoe is in heauen.* Can you thinke, that one is to esteeme that for affliction, which he endures for the confession of Christ our lord; since it is to haue soe high a reward, as that, with soe much honour, he shall be avowed by him at the day of iudgment, before his father? Happy is that sufferace, happy that dishonour, and pouerty, to which soe high an honour doth succcede. What kinde of ioye will it be for you, O my good sifter, to heare these wordes from the mouth of Christ our lord himselfe, and that in presence of the whole world. *Come you blessed of my father and possesse the kingdome which is prepared for you.* What will it bee, when the angells shall thus singe, to her, who hath beene a faithfull seruant, of that ce-

Matt. 10.

Matt. 25.

Psal.
123.

Psa. 31.

lestiall king, Come O spouse of Christ, receiue the crowne which our Lord hath prepared for thee; and that not for one day but for all eternitie. What will the spouses of Christ our Lord conceiue, when hauing passed through the sea of this life, and their enemies who disturbed vs, remayning drowned therein, they shall singe thus with great ioye, for hauing runne through this dangerous world, without being ouerwhelmed by the vices thereof, *The saare is broken, and we are deliuered, our helpe is in the name of our lord.* What a day will that be, when that true *Mary*, the virgin of virgins, shall goe before with her Timbrell, which is her sacred body, praying God both in body and soule; and singe thus. *Come magnisye our Lord with mee, and lett vs exalt his name in mutuall societie with one another.*

Happy are you, if you be found faithfull to the *Spouse* whoe chose you. Happy are you, if you haue the courage to cast away that which is *present*, vnder the most certaine promise of Christ our Lord, for that which is *future*. Be confident, my good sister, in taking his word; for you are not the first to whome he hath passed it, and fulfilled it; neither shall you be she with whome that word shall want effect. He gaue his word to *S. Katherine*, *S. Agnes*, *S. Barbara*, and *S. Lucy*, and to innumerable other Lady virgins; and tell me now, how completely he hath performed it. They had the courage to despise,

the poore present world : and you see that now, they raigne with God. They liued heere in trouble ; and they are nowe in the eternitie of repose. Through how many combatts did they passe, and they now enioye the euerlasting crownes of their conquests. They fled from *sponſes* of the earth, and they brought the king of heauen, to be in loue with them.

If they had followed the trace, of this world, their delight had bene already passed : and their memories would haue bene forgotten. But they loued that, which was eternall, and therefore their felicitie shall not dye : and their memory shall not decay. They were written in the booke of God ; and therefore neither water nor winde, nor fyre nor tyme, can make them waste ; For that booke is incorruptible and foe in the name which is written in it.

You must therefore procure to haue a strong heart towards God, who is your saluation, and doe not thinke that he sells heauen deere to you, for you haue not yet shed your blood for him, as those others shed theirs. Our lord treats you, like a weake creature ; and you should be ashamed to haue giuen him such cause. If you had had more faith, and confidence in him, and more loue to suffer for him, he would haue procured you more afflictions ; to the end that you might haue purchased richer Crownes. Doe not content your selfe with suffering little, considering how great your rewards all bee : and how much Christ

our Lord suffered for you. He gaue his life for you, and he was deeply tormented and despised. How then come you thus to complaine of the touch of a flye? doe but loue, and you will desire to suffer. Let your loue be doubled, and you will suffer sorrowes which are doubled. The loue of our lord, makes such as possesse it, more greedy of suffering, then the loue of ones selfe, of reposing. It makes that any burden weighes light, for loue is stronger then death. He who loues not, groanes vnder the burden, like some lasy beast; but he who loues runnes, and flyes; and it suffers him not to feele the weight euen of his owne body, nor of whatsoeuer els they can lay vpon it.

It is not my good sister, that the afflictions which wee suffer are greater; but that our loue is little. The weight of a pound is noe great weight; but yet lay it vpon some little childe, and he will say, *O how heauy it weighes?* Whereas if a man tooke it vp, he would scarce feele it. And soe take you it, for a signe, that if you loue little your afflictions will weigh heauy vpon you; but if you loue much you will scarce allowe them to be afflictions. For you will be soe inebriated with loue, that nothing can be able to distract you, from the taste thereof. You will finde a good sauour in the very suffering, it selfe; *and you will draw water, out of the rocke; and hony out of the stony hills.*

Num.
20.

Doe but loue, and you shall not be subiect to

afflictions, but you shall be Superiour to them, as their Lady, and you shall praise him who deliueers you from them. If they threaten you with death, you will bid it welcome; *that soe you may enioy true life.* If with banishment, you will say, *That you esteeme your selfe banished where-soeuer you are, till you may arrine to see the face of God: And that it imports you little, whether you goe to heauen, from this, or that part of the earth; And that, if you haue God in your company, where-soeuer you are, you shall be happy; and if not, your owne country will giue you misery enough.* If you see your selfe contemned, say, *Christ our Lord is my honour and he honours mee: let the world despise mee, soe hee value mee.*

Doe not afflict your selfe, about the necessitie which you may sustaine of present things: for of your selfe you must despise them, through the desire which you haue to liue in conformitie with Christ our Lord, whoe made himselfe a poore man for you.

What is there in the world, which ought to fright you? If the loue of Christ our Lord haue wounded you, you will treade the deuill vnder foote; you will despise his threatens; and you will passe with courage, through all your enemies. Put your trust in him, who loues his louers. There is nothing which you will not be able to doe, in him. Goe and buy whatsoeuer you want, of him, though he aske you all this world for

it ; and see that you be not founde without the loue of him , though it should cost you your life. *He is a hidden treasure, but he who findes him, sells all to buy him.* For in him alone, he findes himselfe more rich, then with the multitude of all other things.

And now if it concerne euery one of vs to loue him, how much more doth it import that she doe it, whome he hath chosen for his *spouse*. It becomes the *seruant* to feare his *Maister* ; and the *sonne* to honour his *father* , but the *spouse*, to loue her fellow *spouse*. See you loue our lord, and take noe rest till he haue graunted you this giift. Loue him with reuerence , for that is the kinde of loue, which he likes. Esteeme not him the lesse, because he communicates himselfe to you ; but wonder , how soe greate an altitude as his , can stoope to such a profounde busines as yours. It is the propertie of ill natured and ill mannered seruants to vallow their Maisters at a lesse rate for vouchsafeing to descend and become famelier with them, then if they had liued which them like lords. But they whoe liue in true light esteeme that lord soe much the more , as he doth more vouchsafe to diminish himselfe.

The true loue of Christ our lord carries this badge with it , in token that it is indeede of him ; That as it apprehends , and highly esteemes the goodnes of God, soe it alsoe apprehends, and profoundly disesteemes , the wickednes of man. Therefore loue , adore and

serue

serue our lord, with ioye: but yet reioyce with trēbling. Not a trēbling as of a slaue, in the midst of tormēts, but as of a true, & tender harted childe, who highly feares to giue any disgust to her father, how little it soeuer may be.

Of your selfe you can doe none of these things; but if you humble your hart in the acknowledgment of your owne miseries, if you present your selfe often in prayer, before Christ our lord, if you lodge him in your brest by the Communion; if you heare him speake to you in your spirituall reading, and in fine if you will but giue him leaue to helpe you, you are to haue confidence, that by little & litle he will be healing your soule, notwithstanding all the harsh encounters which may occurre.

Doe not start out of his hāds, though the cure put you to paine; for, in fine, hee will worke the cure at the fittest tyme. And for the afflictions which he sends you, & the delights whereof he depriues you, he will giue you his owne most plentifull delight; which shall inebriate you, as if it were with some swelling riuer; and you shall be in full ioy, for all eternitie, without the want of any good, and without the feare of loosing what you haue. You shall there finde your selfe to be highly well content, & paid; and more felicity shall be imparted to you, then your selfe could tell how to desire. Which felicity is not a creature but a Creatour himselfe of all things; that true God whome liues & ragnes for the eternitie of all eternities. Amen.

*A Letter of the Author to a disciple of his
who was growne a Preist. He
shewes that exterior affli-
ctions must be desired for
the service and loue
of God.*

Right Reuerend Father, I haue receiued your letter, which hath wrought in me the same effect, with those others which formerly I had from you; Namely *rendering of thanks* to our lord, for the gifts which he hath bestowed vpon you, according to the testimony which your words giue, of that which dwells in your heart. It wrought also great confusion in me, to see you call me the *Maister*, and *Father*, of him, to whome I should thinke it a great fauour of our lord, if I could deserue to be a *Sonne*, and a *Disciple*. And especially I was confounded, yea and put to paine, to heare you say in the end of your letter, that you would haue written me many, if it had not beene for the *Decorum*, which you thought your self bound to keepe, of an *Andstour*, and a *Scholler*. This is not a course wherein you must proceed with me; for there is noe reason that you should put me to losse,

onely because I desire, to serue and profit you. And if you treat me in this manner, you will make me heare, and hold my peace.

I know not, if I wrote not to you the other day, of an error, which I haue discovered in some, who yet hold themselves to be spirituall. And it is, that they despise, the corporall afflictions, and troubles, which are vndertaken, for the loue of our lord. If I wrote to you thereof, there wilbe nothing lost, though I say it ouer againe; and if not, it is necessary, that I write it.

Since, that light of our eyes, Christ our lord, liued in this world, vnder soe many afflictions, and died with soe many torments, his seruants remaine soe hungry, of suffering somewhat, that it exceeds the appetite wherewith men of this world, runne after ease. And not onely are they content to suffer affliction, when it comes vpon them, (and much more that kind of affliction, which may be necessary to them for the auoyding of sinne) but they seeke it out, by all the wayes they can, and soe they make prooffe thereby, of the loue they beare to Christ our lord, considering how he was in soe much paine by the afflictions which he endured, for the loue of vs.

For, as the faint and tepid kind of man, would of himselfe be glad to suffer noe afflictions, but yet he beares them with patience when they come, least otherwise he may offend our lord; soe the seruient louer of Iesus Christ,

would faine take noe ease at all ; and if perforce he must take any, he endures it, but with patience , because foe Christ our lord , doth command. In such sort that as he who is but slack, in the service of God , hath delight and ease in his desire, and takes affliction but with patience , foe the true Christian is but patient to see himself at ease , and hath affliction , in his desire.

This growes from the spirit of Christ our lord ; and when this is perfect in a soule, it workes that , which it wrought in him : which was a loue of affliction for vs, the better to shew vs his loue. And therevpon it also followes, that when men would comfort one who is but slack and negligent , vpon the arriuall of any affliction, they must doe it iust foe , as they would comfort a good Christian , when he happens to be in repose and ease. For the one of them suffer ease which he loues not, and iust foe , is affliction suffered by the other. Now this is part of that , which Christ our lord deliuered , when he commanded vs , *to take vp the Crosse, if we meant to be his disciples.* I say it is a part thereof: for the other, and chiefe part whereof this *Crosse* consistes, is the mortification, and death of our self conceyt, and will ; and of our passions and powers.

This is that *old man*, who must die, as Christ our lord died vpon the *Crosse* , what is this old man ? the *body* , which is passible and mortall ; and that other inward man, whereof I haue spo-

ken before, must be also dead in vs.

But although this be the cheife part of carrying the Crosse, we must not put away that other part, howsoever it be lesse principall then this. And though S. Paul say, *Exercitatio corporis ad modicum utilis est*, yet the seruant of Christ our lord, will not leaue to please him, euen in the least things which can be thought. And least we should fall into errour, the same Apostle saith elsewhere. *Castigo corpus meum & in seruitutem redigo* I conceiue not that he said this, because he was tempted with the flesh, as some vnderstand the difficulty whereof he complaynes; but that he would punish and soe cure himselfe, by way of preseruatiue, vsing this exercise of his body, least his mind might otherwise grow sick. And elsewhere he saith, when he recountes the afflictions which he endured. *Semper mortificationem Iesu Christi in corpore nostro circumferentes*, where hee calles that the mortification of Christ: which is the very Crosse of corporall afflictions. In another place he saith also, *Qui Christi sunt, carnem suam crucifixerunt*. And if he had meant this onely, of crucifying the affections, it had sufficed to say, *Cum vitis & concupiscentis*, but by saying *carnem*, it proues, that he meant afflictions of the body.

This he explicates very well, in his Epistle to the *Corinthians* where, amongst other things, wherein men were to exercise themselues, he reckens vp corporall afflictions, namely fasting and watching, so that the whole man, must

Timoth

1. Cor. 9.

2. Cor. 4.

Psal. 5.

Cor. 6.

vnder-goe the *Crosse*, since Christ our lord, died vpon it. Our soule must dye, by the compassion and memory of Christ crucified, and by the mortification of the ould man, as hath beene said: and the *body* also must dye, vpon the *Crosse* of corporall afflictions, that soe the whole man, may be conforme to Christ our lord, as he is in paine, and misery; since heereafter, he is to be conforme to him, as he is in glory. 7

I haue said thus much, that you may take a scantling, of those forces, which God hath giuen you, and that soe you may imploy them, vpon doeing, and sufferring, all you can. And this, not onely considering that it may be addressed to some other good intention, but euen though it be for noe other reason, let it be done, to the end that you may be in conformity with Christ our lord as he was afflicted; and not vpon necessity, but for loue. And though neyther the hairecloath, nor hard bed, nor such thinges as these, howsoeuer they be vsed for the loue of Christ our lord, should saue vs, (*sola enim Crux Christi, est saluifica*) yet at least lett vs vse them in imitation of that extreme pouerty, and sharpe affliction which Christ our lord endured, in being crucified, which consideration, will not be lightly esteemed by vs, if we be not wholly voyd of the loue, we owe him. *Gloria enim magna est sequi dominum.* And thus much of this matter.

There were two other points, of which I thought to haue written, but there is noe time

for them now. I will note them downe, least I should forgett them: vpon condition that you write me word, what there is to be amended in this letter.

A Letter of the Authour to a Lord of great quality, who was sicke, and very fearfull of death. He teaches him how he is to carry himself.

I Haue receiued your lord-ships letter, I haue read it, and I haue vnderstood it; and I hope, our lord hath mercy for you in store. For it is noe great wonder, that his greatnes should doe fauour to one who deserues it not; since he hath done it soe often, to such as haue deserued the expresse contrary. I am not sorry a whitt, that your lord-ship is affrayed of death; for although this feare be a thing paynefull, there is noe hurt for a man to apprehend it; and many times it is sent by our lord; to the end, that, by the spurre of feare, we may bee vrged on to doe that, which wee will not doe, for the spurre of loue. And he as being a father of mercy, vsfull to guide those affaires, in such an admirable manner; as that, both feare, and hope, may helpe vs to ride that way, which it is necessary, for him to pre-

pare, and to make playne; and in fine thus *seare*, serues for many good purposes, and it is hurtfull for none.

I desire, that your lordshipp, would commaund that house to bee built, where your pages are to bee lodged. As also, that you would defrey the cost of those armes, and horse, wherewith those townes of yours are charged. I wish more ouer, that you would not cause any sumptuous cloathes, or furniture, or such like things to bee prouided now. Besides if you remember any thing which you may haue wonne ill at play, which either is not restored, or els not lost againe to the same partyes, I aduise you to make restitution thereof. And, forasmuch as the men, who are Lords of states, as your Lordship is, are not able to reach to the knowledge of all the wrongs which may bee done to others by you, noe nor yet your seruants (through their negligence) I could wish, you would commaund it to bee published, in all the Churches of your state, that whosoever had receiued any wrong by you, should declare the same, and that satisfaction should be giuen him. And you shall doe well, to appoint the Prior of Saint Dominique, and the Pastor of your Church where you dwell, and some man learned in the lawes; who knowes the affaires of your state, to heare, and see what were fitt to bee done. Some particular causes your Lordship shall doe well to heare your self, (though it should be of some trouble to you) that so

They may not say elsewhere, that this course puts you to more payne, then it doth. I desire by all meanes, that all this may bee done; for it seemes to mee to be a fitt remedy of all those wrongs, which may concerne your neighbours; & now, it is as easy to doe it well as it will be hard, if it be adiorned, till after this life. Let it be noe impediment to this, that the world may chaunce not to like it; since he, whose respects the pleasure of God, will easely despise, that of the world.

As for that person, with whome your lordship willed mee to speake, I haue not done it yet: for, I haue now kept my bed ten or twelue dayes together, But yesterday, I rose, and I will take great care to doe what you commaund very shortly: and you shall knowe what I finde.

Since you went from hence, our lord hath beene pleased to giue mee a much more particular care to recommend you into the hands of his mercy. I did not then, vnderstand the cause, it is like to be this that there is more neede thereof. Be it what it will, your lordship is to animate your self with new courage, to offer your self vp to the will of our lord: like one who performes seruice to his father who is some great man, whome hee loues much: your lordship was not borne for your self, but for God. For euen before you were borne, you were already purchased by *Iesus Christ*, who bought vs, with himself (a price of inestimable valewe) to the end that wee, who liue, might as *S. Paul* sayeth, *not liue to our-selues, but to him.* Who is hee, that

will pretend to remayne his owne, now that he sees himself to haue beene bought, by Almighty God, and by the price of God himself?

There are men, who offer themselves to the losse of their liues in some wart for slight causes: and shall wee be soe destitute of courage: as not to giue our-selues to God? He gaue himself for vs, into the hands of those base executioners: and shall not wee aduenture to putt our-selues into his? He did it, that he might die: and wee are to doe it, that wee may liue.

I would not haue your lordshipp to be niggardly herein, but make now this account. There is a God; and for that misery, which he hath endured for mee; and for those sinnes which he hath forgiven mee, and for those blessings which he hath vouchsafed mee; I owe my self to him, three thousand times ouer. If hitherto I haue not giuen him, the entire dominion ouer my self, I am sorry for it. From this instant I giue my self free; and without any impediment, or obligation otherwise; that he may treat me wholly, according to his will; and that mine, may submitt it self, to his, as well in the doeing of any thing which he commaundes, by his holy lawe: as in the suffering of any affliction, which he shall either continue, or add to mee. Where can I be kept better, then in the hands of God, into which I putt my self? since he suffers not his creatures to be lost: and was content to loose his life, that I might be enabled to doe this. He would not

aske it of mee, if he did not like it : and he would not take pleasure in itt, if he did not desire it. For it is not a proceeding for God to vse , to desire vs to giue him that , which he hath noe mind to receiue, any more , then it is his custome, to commaund that wee aske, and yet he forbear to giue. And since he hath notified his deare will to vs, wherewith he desires our good, and consequently that wee may bee his : let vs not doubt to belciue, but that he, (who is so carefull to demaund, and he who demaunds with the menace of hell , if it be not graunted , and with promise of the kingdome of heauen if it be) will not be slacke in receiuing that very thing , which he demaunds.

Let it not seeme to your Lordship, that the sinnes of your former life, ought to diuert you, from this amorous embracement of Almighty God : since he stands crying out to a sinner, with his armes all open, and since he doth so, before the sinner calles on him. For thus he saith. *Fornicata es cum amatoribus multis , tamen reuertere ad me, & ego suscipiam te.* Thou hast committed fornication with many louers : but yet returne to mee, and I will receive thee.

Jerem
3.

The shepheard will not easily be weary in seeking his lost sheepe, nor the falkoner in procuring to recouer his hauke ; and when he findes her, he takes her : and returnes home, with much ioy,

I say this, because by what I conceiue of

your lordship, you are endewed with a greater measure of the knowledge of your self, then of the knowledge of God: and therefore, that you will be more subiect to feare, then to hope, and loue, I wish you not to retract the ill opinion you haue of your selfe: confesse, and beleieue, that you haue cause: and doe not seeke to remoue your feare, with false hopes, and lyes: to diminish your miseryes, by that meanes. This would not indeed proue any diminution, but an addition of one mischeif, vpon the backe of another, and the latter, would be worse then the former; and an impediment, in steed of a remedy: since God neuer graunts his pardon and mercy, but to such a one, as vnderstands his owne miserie.

But beleieue, that as wee are more wicked, then wee can arriue to knowe: soe is God more good, then wee can possibly imagine. Another kind of hart hath he, then wee conceiue, and especially in pardoning: which men knowe very ill how to doe, because they knowe not well how to loue. And from hence it growes, that they are not able to reach, to that height of mercy, which God vouchsafes to sinners. For as they know nothing by experience of themselves, but anger, against such as offend them (and if they pardon, there yet remaines a thousand reliques of the disgust, and withall a great cooling of theyre loue) therfore doe they iudge of God, as they would doe of themselves; and if they say with theyre mouths, that there is difference betweene God and man, and that they

forgiue as well as they can; yet theyr harts doe not beate to the same time. When your lordships sonnes shall bee more growne, and shall haue giuen you some disgusts; you will haue had some sent, and taste of this.

The father doth not vnloue the sonne, although that sonne make him angry; but he correctes him, and still carries the hart of a father towards him. And soe is our lord wont to proceede; and whensoever the sinner hath a mind to returne to him, he refuses not to receiue him into his paternall hart.

Yea and euen when he retournes not, he is desiring that he would retourne: and all his sinnes are not able to quench this desire in him, fort his *loue* is that which still exceeds.

Now wee gayne this loue, and this retreat, in to the hart of God, by him, who is the Mediatour betweene God, and men *Iesus Christ* our lord. Who being the naturall sonne, did gayne the adoption of sonnes for vs: and that God should haue the hart of a father towards vs, his sonnes; whensoever wee would dispose our selues to enioy this benefitt, by meanes of *penance*, and the *Sacraments*. This loue, is as the roote, from whence it proceedes, that Almighty God is content to expect vs, to call vs, to receiue vs, to pardon vs, and to saue vs. For if wee consider well, the hart, and loue, where-with this fauour is done vs; it will enamour vs, and oblige vs more to him, then the fauour it self, which he affordes, what a thing is it, that

God doth soe much loue man, as through the much loue he beares him, and notwithstanding the great offences which man committes against him, he yet doth not take this loue from him; nor doth it euer make him say, *I will loue such a one noe more, though he come to mee agayne : I will not seeke him out, nor will I send to entreate him; that he may retourne to my house.* He saith noe such thing as this. But that perseuering loue, doth still burne with a liuely flame; and this soe very clearely, that as these great waters of his torments, could not soe quench them, as to make him forbear to dye for vs: soe neither can the much greater waters of our sinnes, extinguish this enflamed charity of God towards vs. But it remaynes euer conquerour, both in his paynes, and in our offences: suffering there, and forgiuing heere. Hee who shall wonder at this, will haue reason. For it would be a wonderfull thing, if this kind of loue were shewed, euen from an inferiour, to a superiour; or at the most, from but an equall, to an equall. Butt now, this loue from God to man, is more then wonderfull. And yet, on the other side, he who shall not beleue it, in respect that it is so straunge a thing, putts a great affront vpon Almighty God, since he beleuiues it not, because it is soe wonderfull a worke.

Whereas, on the other side it is as cleare way whereby to knowe the workes of God; if they be soe great, as to make such wonder,

as know them. For if he be wonderfull, his workes are also to be soe. And if the reste of his workes be wonderfull, these of his loue, are wonderfull in the highest degree: forasmuch as they spring, out of his goodnes: in the manifestation whereof, he takes more delight, and glory, and vses it more, then in the manifestation of the other attributes. As the Prophet Dauid saith, *Miserationes eius super omnia opera eius. His mercyes are ouer all his workes.* How ill therefore are they aduised, who refuse to beleieue that which God doth, because it is much; and who refuse to expecte, and hope, because that which he promises is much: comparing, and parallelling the great acts of God, by the soe short measure of theyre owne poore vnderstanding.

The woeman of *Samaria*, cannot arriue to knowe, how Christ our lord can come by any water: and much lesse, how he can bestow any such water, as that whosoever dranke thereof should thirst noe more. But our lord saith, that the woeman knowes not the guift of God, nor who it is that aduises her to faith, and penance: and who is ready to infuse the holy Ghost, into her hart. And soe, there are still, men soe cowardly, and weake in faith, that they cannot beleieue any thing of God, but onely in conformity with theyre owne poorenes. Placeing theyre eyes vpon theyre little strength, and theyre little desert: and so like beasts of earth they creepe vpon the earth, and rise noe higher.

Psal.
144.

Iohn.
4.

But he that lookes vpon God, who giues vs his sonne, who is his loue, and who sweetnes God to wards vs; and in whome he is soe highly content, and in whome his diuine eyes take delight, how can he doubt, of that hart, but that it will bee fauourable to vs, when wee call vpon it, with peynance; and pitifull in all those necessities, which may occurre to vs. He therefore who knowes this, and desires it as he ought, may well hope, that he shall haue it. And with hauing that, he hath all good; and will haue nothing to feare, as that slaue must doe who wantes loue.

Gen. 17.

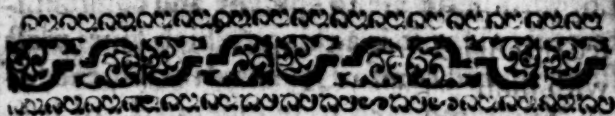
Iosue 5

Make therefore haste, to loue this Lord, who loues you soe much; and hath conserued you so well. And if euer you had a desire to reforme your self, and to follow our Lord yet closer, be sure that you renew it, and encrease it now. For our Lord commaunded twice, that his people should bee circumcised. Once when he enioyned *Abraham*, to doe it; and the second time, when he brought *Iosue* into the land of promise. The first, signifies the first coming of a man, from a worldly, and wicked life, to follow the way of the will of God, which is the *streight way*; especially in the eyes of the world. The second is, when God will carry a soule to his kingdome, and then he commaunds it, to behould it self with new seruour; and to amend it self, and to cutt of all superfluity; to the end, that, with purity, and ioy, it may expecte that crowne of a kingdome, which the goodnes of

God

God hath prepared for his seruants. Your Lordship must vse to confesse and communicate often; for it is a thing, which giues most strength, and comfort, to heare the sentence of our absolution; and to receiue our Lord *Iesus* Christ into our bosomes. You must pray, and read, and giue almes, and doe whatsoeuer other good worke, our Lord shall inspire you to. And let mee knowe how the world goes with you. And if your Lordship recouer your health, wee will yet remaine with hauing put our soule well in order; and with hauing gotten strength against feare. The *Holy Ghost*, that great comforter, which through *Iesus Christ* our Lord; was giuen to such as are well disposed, to receiue it, dwell euer in your Lordship, and teach you how you may best please him, and guide you, by the right way. Amen.





A Letter of the Anthour to a lady who was sick. He comforts her in her afflictions, and animates her to beare them for the love of Christ our lord, who was soe afflicted for her.

M Adam I haue vnderstood, that you are sick, and I am not sory for it. For if it come to you through any excesse of pennance, the punishment is well employed, and if you be sick vpon noe other reason but onely because our lord sēdes it to you, let vs bid it welcome in a good houre, as being a part of his *Crosse*. And though in some respect, your paine puttes me to paine, as our lord knowes, yet on the other side, I am glad of it, because I cleary discern the profits which will be made vpon this occasion, by one whome I soe much desite to see improued. They are not comforts which I wish to my children, but they are corrections; the time of comfort comes afterward. For the present, take not your eyes from of the *Crosse*, nor your heart from him who placed you on it. Giue not ouer till you finde that sufferance is of a sweet taste, for that is the true touch of loue. Take noe compassion vpon your selfe, for there are both in heauen and earth, who haue compassion on you, from

their very hearts, and that which is laid on you was very well considered of before; and it passed through the handes of one; who loues you with most perfect loue.

Let not your faith grow weake in these necessities, and dangers, nor your loue by the feeling of these afflictions: when the fire is great, the winde doth not onely not quench it, but inflame it. And soe when a soule loues God but in iest, any little blast of aire puts it out, as it would doe a candle. But true loue growes vp in affliction, for it applies more strength wherewith to endure, the more weight, it sees coming towards it. And because that loue is of God, it conquers affliction: and noe water could serue to quench that fire, which comes downe from heauen.

Our lord called you, that you might loue him, and this loue is noe such thing as must giue you reason to regale your selfe. But you must abhorre your selfe for the loue of Christ our lord, and denye your selfe, to confesse him: and be cruell to your selfe, that you may be sweet and acceptable to his diuine Maiesty. If you loue and desire to enioy your selfe; you must resolue to loose your selfe. If you desire to see the face of God, you must passe towards him through the pikes. If you care to lodge him in your hart, cast your selfe away, with all other creatures vpon him. Our lord will haue you all alone; and all afflicted, not for any ill will he beares you, but because since his owne

naturall sonne, was soe afflicted, he likes not to see his adopted sonnes apparrelled with any other liuery then that. There is nothing soe beautifull in his sight, as to see the image of his onely begotten sonne in vs. And as there is nothing, vpon which a soule can soe gladly looke, as vpon our lord *Iesus* being tormented for loue of vs vpon the *Crosse*, and the more afflicted and deformed we see him there, the more beautifull he seemes to vs, soe the more wee suffer for God, the more beautifull wee shall seeme to him.

Nor is it much, that a soule which desires to seeme handsome in the sight of God, should adorne it selfe with such curious cleansing waters, as may enamour his diuine Maiesty by his seeing her, since the women of the world doe many thinges which put them to no small trouble, and charge, soe that they may content the sonnes of men. Madam we must cast our skinnies, before we shall be pleasing to Almighty God. Gould is purified by fire, and the terrestriall part being consumed, it comes resplendent from the Crucible.

Let vs be ashamed of being soe weake, in a busines which is soe great, as to import the pleasing of Almighty God: and if we vnderstood this poynt well indeed, we should get heart euen to shed our blood for him, that soe we might appeare fairer in his sight. As a certaine holy *Eremite*, considering this very thing, and seeing a woman of the world goe soe gallant, and soe well adorned, he began to weepe and

say, Pardon me, O lord, pardon me I besetch thee: for the curious dressing, which this woman, bestowes vpon her selte in this one day, to please the eyes of the world, ouerstrips all the paines which I haue taken many yeares for the pleasing of thine.

Soe that, my good lady, this entreprife of loue is noe matter of wordes, but of sorrow, of bitter torments, of the dishonour of the world, of being abandoned by the creatures thereof, & sometimes euen of the seeming absence from the protection of the Creatour. And notwithstanding all this a man must cary a good countenance, and not be subiect to complaintes, or deiection of heart: but he must resemble that Martyr, whose bowels they drew out of his body, and whose flesh they tore from his bones, with iron combes: and yet there sounded noe word out of his mouth but the name of *Iesuu*, nor was there any thing in his hart, but *Blessed be God*, togeather with a purpose to endure yet more, if God should dispose himselfe to send it.

To suffer for Christ our lord, is great glory, and God impartes not that, but to such a one, as whome he loues much. A great mercy it is to giue a guilty person fillips, and to release those scourges, which were his dew, and if that wherein we stand obliged to the iustice of God, may be satisfied by what we can suffer heere, in the name of God let vs fall to worke, and let vs pay whatsoeuer his diuine Maiesty will impose, foe that being gone from hence, we may in-

stantly by behold the face of God. Let vs labour in this banishment of ours; for instantly vpon the end thereof, we shall be landed in our owne country. *S. Augustine* saith *that he wrongs a Martyr who prays for him when he is dead* for Martyrdome makes a soule fly streight vp to heauen. Let vs therefore labour to be Martyrs by our patience in affliction, for though our persecution be not soe greiuous as theirs was for the time, yet it lastes longer. And we should indeed desire, that this life might not be too recreatiue, but a meere Martyrdome. For such was the life of our Lord, and such doth hee desire that ours should be.

There haue beene many martyrs for the faith of Christ our Lord, but in fine many are gone to heauen, who were not soe. But we all must be the Martyrs of loue, if we meane to goe thither. This loue must torment vs, and put vs to paine, both because our selues offend God, as also because others doe it. This loue must deprive vs of the comforts of this life, and must load our shoulders with a *Crosse*. This loue must make vs first embrace affliction, and then passe ouer it, in the flame which was kindled by our loue of God. This makes vs endure dishonours without feeling them as wine doth a drunkard. This loue is in this, like all other loue, that whosoever possesses it seekes not himself but his beloued, who in our case, is God alone and

his holy will. But this loue which now is soe cruell, how full of compassion will it be afterwarde, to him who hath bowed downe the head to receiue. Martyrdome at the hand thereof?

A man cannot easily feele the force of loue, wherewith it torments heere, nor that wherewith it comforts afterwarde. Let vs beleue it, since God hath said, it; and let vs walke on in the faith, which we haue in his words; for we haue yet a long way to make. Choose which you had rather haue, cyther long afflictions, or els very great ones, for noe man can scape suffering much, cyther in one fashion or another. Be not sorry for this, for if God giue you much affliction, it is because your many sinnes deserue it; and soe you are to make your payment heere, and I beseech our Lord that you may doe soe. For if I should dye, before you want to Purgatory, perhaps you might want a freind whoe would carry soe much compassion to your soule as my self; and would take soe much care to free it, and if you dye first, I shall haue paine enough, in thinking of you.

Excuse mee, for it is not fit, that cyther you or I, should haue an eye to our owne ease; but that although wee should know, that after this life wee must suffer paine, yet heere we must also take courage to suffer afflictions for loue, & loue is content

with nothing, but loue. Christ our lord suffered for our loue. Christ our lord carried the *Crosse*, and lett vs help him to cary it on. Christ our lord is dishonoured, and I renounce honour. Christ our lord suffered torments, and therefore they shall be welcome to me. He was subiect to many necessities, and I submitte my selfe to the same. For me he made himselfe a stranger, and I desire not to be the owner of any single thing, wherein my heart may rest. He dyed for me, and lett my life be a continuall death, for the loue of him. *Let me liue yet now not me, but let Christ our lord liue in me*, and that Christ, who was crucified, exhausted, abandoned by all the world, and receiued alone by Almighty God.

Gal. 2.

This Christ I loue; vpon the *Crosse* will I seeke him, and from thence haue I noe desire to finde him. Let him dispose of me, how he will, for my part I will suffer affliction for him. Let him choose whether he will giue me any reward or noe; for the very suffering it selfe, is an abundant reward. And if he would graunt me a great suite, I would desire noe other, then to haue afflictions: for thereby I may know that I loue him, and that he alsoe loues me, since he layes me vpon the *Crosse*, where himselfe lay. For though I haue noe ayme at mine owne profit, yet I know full well that if I continue vpon the *Crosse*, he will cary me to his Crowne. To him be glory, through the eternity of all eternities. Amen.

*A Letter of the Authour, to one, who formerly had
beene a disciple of his, and then being of the Socie-
ty of Iesus, was grown to be, at the poynt of
death. He congratulates his departure hence, and
his going to enjoy the fruites of his labour in his
Order; and he gines him great hope, of the eternall
kingdome, by meanes of the blood of Christ our
Lord.*

THE grace of the holy Ghost, be euer with
you. Though heere they say that you are
vpon the point of passing into the land, of the
liuing, soe as a man may thinke, that whilest I
am writing this, you may already be enjoying,
the deare imbracements of our allswete Iesus;
yet I thought it not amisse, to venture this let-
ter towards you; congratulating with you,
your promotion to that *Prebēd*, in the Church of
the celestially Ierusalem, where, without all cea-
sing, God is praised, and seene, *face to face*. Goe
in a good houre, most deare father, goe I say,
in a good houre, both to see all Good, and to
possesse it, for all eternity. Goe in a good houre,
to the bosome of the celestially father, where he
entertaines those lambes of his, with glory;
which heere he fed with his grace, and corre-
cted with his discipline.

Now my good Father, shall you see the
fauour, which God did you, in calling you to

a Religious life, and in giuing you grace, in the strength whereof, you dispising the world, might follow him, by the way of the Crosse. For now in recompence thereof, he will giue you *heauen* for your Religious Order, and *glory* for that Crosse, which you haue borne for his sake. Blessed be our lord *Iesus Christ*, who hath goodnes enough, to induce him to giue such glory, to such wormes of the earth; *raising vp the poore man out of the dust, that he may sit amongst the Princes of his people.* Happy is the houre of our corporall death, since thereby wee are exalted, & intituled to take our seate, amongst those princes, who liue eternally, in the high presence of God. O day, which is the end of labours, and the end also, of sinnes, and in which, wee ascend to serue our Lord, in good earnest, and not as wee are wont to doe heere below, where wee are all discomforted, through the imperfections of those seruices, which we performe to God. For heere a man goes halting, & faynting with hunger, through his desire to please that diuine Maiesty, & to serue him with all the soule. But in heauē, this desire is perfected, & that, in so cōpleat a manner, that all the whole man, is imployed in the seruice, & praise of God, without being subiect to the least impedimēt, which may interpose it self

Blessed be God, who hath, soe soone beene pleased to gather you vp, into his granary, *least mallice might els haue chaunged your mind*, and to shew you the riches of his bounty, who for soe few yeares of seruice, imparts an eternity of reward.

Sir, this is God, this I say is God, this is the fruit of his passion, this is the valew of his grace; this is our happy encounter, to haue fallen into the hands of such a Lord, to know him, & to loue him, though it be with many imperfections. But he waines them away by his blood, making vs partakers of his Sacraments. And the paternall loue, which he beares vs, both makes him easily encline to pardon our faults, & to be very copious in rewarding our seruices. And he cōducts vs through the middest of *the red sea*, to *the land of promise* diuiding vs, from our sinnes as farre of, as the East, is from the West, and drowning them in his blood. Soe that although wee may see them still, yet wee shall see them dead, & they will serue but to giue vs matter, & reason, to praise our Lord, who hath cast *both the horse and horseman, into the sea*.

Psal.
102.

Exod.
14.

Goe Sir, with the benediction of our lord God, to enioy the riches of your deer Father, which he gayned for you, with the launce in his had, & by shedding his owne blood, who neuer fayles to succour all such as place their hope, & loue in him. It is true that wee shall misse you, & that wee shall thinke our selues to be all alone when we are heere without you, but since God hath desired you to this great happynes, let vs, who loue you, hold it for our owne. And wee who in our owne right, shall lament, will yet reioyce with you in yours, like the brothers of *Rebecca*. who is going to be esponsed, with *Isaak*, which signifies i. And therefore, wee

Gen.
24.

say to you, you are our brother, and wee desire that you may encrease to thousands of thousands, and that your seedemay possesse the gates of your enemyes.

Pf. 22.

I doe not pretend to tell you, how you must prepare your self, for this Feast, for there you haue them, who can doe it, and who will helpe you to passe on, out of the hands of men, into the hands of God. And let our lord who came into the world for you, and who ascended vp to the Crosse for you, be he who succours you in such sorte, that *though you walke in the middest of the shadow, of death, you may yet feare noe ill*. See you call vpon him, for though you should bee *in the whales belly*, yet he harkeneth to his seruants, euen when they are there. Call vpon his Blessed Mother, who is also ours. Call vpon the Saints, who are our Fathers, and our brethren; for with such helpes as those, you cannot feare to loose the celestially kingdome.

Ionas
3.

And if our lord, will haue you passe through Purgatory, let his name be blessed still; for soe that you may haue hope to see him, you shall gladly endure any thing, which may be imposed. I beseech Christ our Lord who dyed for you, to accompany you at your death, and receiue you into his owne armes, when you departe out of this life. Say you to him, as hee sayd to his Father, *In manus tuas Pater, commendo spiritum meum*. And I confide in his mercy, that you shall be receiued by him, as a sonne; and treated as the heire of God, and coheyre with Christ our Lord.

Luc. 23.

*A Letter of the Authour to a Religious
Woeman, who Was neere her death.*

*He encourages her, and shewes
how she is to carry her self,
at that time.*

DEuout seruant of Christ our Lord; you
sent mee word, that you were in the last
dayes of your life; and that this, was the time,
wherein you desired mee to remember you. Soe
I doe. And though the newes you giue mee, is
not pleasing to flesh and bloud; yet when I
looke vpon you, with christian eyes, it is to
recreate my soule. And soe is it also to recreate
yours, as our Lord saith in the Ghospell; when
those things beginne to shew themselves, looke about Luc. 21.
you, and lift vp your heades, for your redemption is
neere at hand. For though Christ haue freed you
by his goodnes, & the merit of his bloud, from
mortall sinnes; yet still you are in daunger of
committing euen then, and you actually com-
mitt venial sinnes; and you are still in the capti-
uity of your body, which is soe subiect to mise-
rie, as that it makes, euen a S. Paul and others,
who are like him, sigh and groane; and say, as
him self relates it, that they liued in expectation of Rom. 8.
the redemption of their body.

But there, you shall neither sinne mortally, nor venially. For by meānes of the *blond* of that *lambe*, which was shed for vs, hell, where they euer sinne, shall haue nothing to doe with you, but onely *Purgatory*; where though they *suffer*, yet they *sinne* not. And from thence, you shall goe forth to see your *Spouse*; to enioy that blisse, which he wonne for you, with the nailes in his hands, and with his feete fastened to the *Crosse*. And forasmuch as, it is a stranger thing, to see God nailed vpon a *Crosse*, then to see you placed in *heauen*; I confide in his goodnes, that, since he had mercy enough, to make him doe the *more*, he will not want it for that which is the *lesse*.

Thither will he carry you, thither, I say, will he carry you, to remaine with himself. For the *espousalls*, which heere were celebrated betwene you, when you solēnely made *Profession*, that you would liue and dye in the state of *Religion*, was one day to be concluded, by that being, together both of him the *bride*, and of her, his fellow *spouse* in *heauen*. There shall you see yourself, in soe great liberty, and aboundance, that you will esteeme your inclosure, & afflictions, heere, for well employed. And there will they giue you, a body, which though in substance it shall be the very same, which heere you haue; yet shall it be very different, in health, and life, and other things. And you will incomparably more reioyce in it there, then you haue suffered in it, heere. All entire, all entire, in bodye, and soule, are yow to bee blessed

there; and soe beautified, as is fitt for the honour of him, who tooke you for his *sponse Iesus Christ* the lord, both of this, & the other world. Be not therefore dismayed, when you are to dye; by thinking of what your owne sinnes deserue. Christ our lord, can doe all things, and he loues you, & will not forsake you. And since he hath preserued you; in this time of your nauigation, amongst all the tempests of this life; be sure, that he will not suffer you to perish; now that you are going to disinbarke.

Putt your self wholly into his hād, offering your self entirely, to him, both in life, & death, and to whatsoeuer he will. And beg pardon of him, by his blood, for all that, wherein you haue offetided him: and being confessed, & communicated, cast your self headlong at his seete, and desire of him, one drop of his blood, whereby you may be washed, and haue great confidence, that you shall bee soe.

Be as reserued, to your selfe, & as free from all conuersation, as the state of your sicknesse will permit. For our Lord, before he was to dy, left his disciples, that he might pray in solitude, to his father, giuing vs so to vnderstād, that in this traunee, we must resēble him. And let your discourse be with Christ our lord, & with his *Bl Mother*. And to the end that your infirmity diuert you not, from them; it will be well, that you behould an image of the *Crucifix*; & of his *Mother* stāding by him. Giue thākes to our lord, with your whole hart, for the fauour he hath

done you, whether they be generall, or particular; and cast your self into the wounds of Christ our Lord, which is that *Sanctuary*, out of which, his *Iustice*, must not drawe such malefactorours, as are repentant. And repose you there, and conceiue strong hope, that by meanes of his bloud, and death, you shall goe, and enioy, that life in heauen, which neuer is to haue an end. Our Lord Iesus be euer with you. Amen:



A Letter of the Authour to a woman, who did greatly feele the absence and disfauour of our Lord. He animates her to confide in our Lord; and he assigned diuerse causes; why God afflictes his seruants; and of the fruit, which his Diuine Maieſty reapes from thence.

DOe not conceiue that to be anger in our Lord, which indeede proceedes from true loue. For as he, who beares ill will to another, doth flatter sometimes, and fawne vpon him; so true loue sometimes corrects and chides. And the holy Scripture saith, *That the woundes, which are giuen by him, wholones, are better, then the false kisses of him, who hates.* And therefore we doe him an extreame wrong, who reprocues, or punishes vs out of the bowells of his loue, if we thinke or say, that he persecutes vs, as if he
loues.

loues vs not. Doe not forgett, that the Mediatour betweene God the Father and vs, is *Iesus Christ* our lord, by whome we are beloued; and tyed with so strong a bond of loue, that nothing is able to vndoe it, if man himself do not cutt the knott, by the guilt of mortall sinne.

Haue you so soone forgotten, that the bloud of *Iesus Christ* cryes out in the demaunde of mercie for vs? and that his crye is so lowde, as that it drownes the crye of our sinnes, so that it cannot be heard? Doe you not know, that if our sinnes should still remayne alieue, notwithstanding that *Christ Iesus* dyed to defeate them, his death should be of litle worth, since it could not worke that effect? Let no man sett a light price vpon that, which was so highly valued by Almighty God; that he holdes it for a sufficient, yea a superabundant discharge, forasmuch as concernes his parte therein, of all the sinnes of the whole worlde; and of a thousand worldes, if there were so manie.

They, who are lost, are not lost for want of payment, but for want of seruing themselues thereof, by meanes of Faith and Pennance, and the Sacraments of the holie Church. Settle once this truth in your hart, and doe it soundly, that *Christ* our lord tooke the businesse of our redemption to his owne charge as verily, as if it had beene his owne; and he calles our sinnes, his: by the mouth of *Dauid*, saying: *Longè a salute mea, verba delictorum eorum*; And he demaunded pardon for them, though himselfe

Ps. 21

Iohn.
17.

committed none; and he desired with a most profound intermall loue, that his seruants might be beloued, as if he had desired it for himself: and as he desired it, he obtayned it. For, according to the ordinance of God, he and we are so much one thing, that either he and we must be beloued, or he and we must be abhorred. And since he neither is, nor can euer be abhorred, neither can we also be so, if we be incorporated into him, by Faith and Loue. But indeede, because he is beloued, we are also beloued, and that iustly: because he weighes more, towards the making of vs to be beloued, then we doe, to make him be abhorred. And the Father loues his Sonne, more, then he abhorres such sinners, as are conuerted to him. And as one, who was much beloued by his Father, he said to him to this effect: Either loue them, or loue not me; for I offer myself in pardon of their sinnes, to the ende, that they may be incorporated into myself. The greater loue ouercame the lesser hate, & we are beloued, pardoned, and iustified: & we haue great hope not to be forsaken there, where there is so strong a knott of loue.

If through our weakenesse we be afflicted with excessiue feares, (as now you are, conceiuing that God hath forgotten you) our lord hath provided you a comfort, saying thus by the Prophet: *Shall the mother perhaps be able to forgett to take pittie vpon the childe of her wombe? well, if she doe, yet will not I forgett thee; for I carrie thee written in my hands.* O writing, which art so

firme, whose penne be hard nayles, whose inke is the bloud it self of him, who writes, and the paper is his owne very flesh: and his word saith thus: *I haue loued thee with an eternall loue, and therefore I haue drawen thee towards me with mercie.*

ere. 31.

Such a writing therefore as this, must not be litle esteemed, especially when one findes in himself, that his soule is drawen by the sweetnesse of good purposes, which are signes of that eternall loue, wherewith our Lord hath chosen and loued him. Be not therefore scandalized, or afflicted for any of these things, which happen to you: since they all are dispensed by those very hands, which were nayled to the Crosse for you, in testimony of the loue hee bare you. And if you desire to vnderstand, what you gett heereby, in the intencion of God who sendes them, you must know, that they are tryalls, whereby you may be examined: that afterward (as one, who hath bene faithfull in the conflict) you may be crowned by the hād of our lord, with a Crowne of Iustice.

And to the ende, you may not thinke, that the particulars, which you endure, are signes of reprobation: and that they are sent by our Lord to none but wicked men, heare what Dauid saith in his owne person, and of many others, who walked in the way of God: *I sayd in the excesse of my soule, that I am cast of before the countenance of thine eyes.* And though this dismay of hart, and the disfa-
uour, which wee finde in the midst

Psal.
30.

thereof, be a thing, which doth much afflict, and that the soule can take no ayme of how it standes in the sight of God, nor how it shall stande, nor what ende that Crosse shall haue: yet neuerthelesse there are few things in the world, which are so forcible to purge sinnes, or which teach a man soe manie truties, as doth this darke obscuritie, and inward affliction, which makes the soule sweate dropes of blood.

Our lord sendes this to his seruants, that they may not departe this life, without feeling, what crosses and tribulations are. And therefore he wounds them in the spirit, wherein they liue: For, if he should but wound them in temporall things, to which they are dead, they would haue no sence at all thereof. You must therefore be sure to giue a good accompt of that dangerous passage, wherein God hath beene pleased to bestow you: and you must adore his iudgements. And being comforted through confidence in his goodnesse, bowe downe that head of yours, without anie more sisting into the matter, and open the mouth of your hart, to swallow downe this pill of darkenesse, and desolation, and disfaueur of God, through the obedience, which you owe to the same God. And knowe for certaine, that vnlesse you haue a minde to breake your word, and vn say your self in this tryall, which God sendes to you, you must resolute to make yourself strong, as the Angell did Iosue: and you, must liue,

dying euerie day, as S. Paul did.

1. Cor.

15.

You must be baked in the fire of tribulation, that so you may grow hard, like anie bricke: and fitt to resist the raynes, and windes of temptation, and troubles, and that you be not soft, like the dawbing of a wall, which is instantly dissolved by water, and no way fitt for a strong building. For the people, who are to be placed in that house of heauen, must be beaten, and hammerd here on earth by the knockes of manie tribulations and temptations, as it is written: *Our lord tryed them, and found them worthe of himself.* Learne you therefore to sustaine your self with strong foode; and strue to conuerte these stones of tribulation into bread, if you desire to haue the testimonie of being the childe of God. And if he giue you an appetite to eate the white, and new bread of consolation, remitt it back againe to the will of our lord: and be content with being sure, that you shall haue so much of that in the next world, as that the sweetnesse thereof, will farre and farre exceede the recompence, which might be due for anie bitterness sustayned in this. And in steede of those hard bones, which here they gaue you to be gnawed vpon, by your soule: you shall there be employed in feeding vpon that most sauorie bread of life, which is God himself: and thereof there will neuer be an ende. And therefore hope for this, and comfort yourself with this: for the businesse, whereof wee are now in question, is not fitt for them, who are either of

Sap. 3.

a delicate life, or a weake faith.

You will see yourself many times in such a kinde of state by these afflictions, as that if you consider them with the sense of flesh and blood, you will thinke them to be the very markes of hell, and euen a beginning thereof; but yet you must suffer it with patience, though it be without comfort. yea and though you do not so much as feele your owne confidence; that so you may knowe, what it is, to suffer in good earnest. For as long as a man's confidence is very strong, there is nothing, which can afflict him very much, but when God hides his face, and shewes the soule no fauour, but disfaour; and when it is persecuted by enemies, and yet feeles not the helpe of her good friend, then indeede is it pure suffering, and hath a taste euen of the very torments of hell. You will not then discern any hope, which you may haue to escape, but you must content yourself with this, that you despaire not; and let that discomfort be accepted by you, in penance for your sinnes, wherein once you tooke delight; and let it at length serue to make you clearely see, how litle that is, which you are able to doe of yourself. It is but reason, that he, who sinnes by louing and liking himself, should pay for it, by being inwardly and profoundly disgusted with himself; and that he, who had confidence in himself, may see, to his cost, that he is good for nothing.

Through this fire must you passe, if you

desire to enioy the rest of heauen. In this warre must you ouercome, if you will deserue the Crowne of that kingdome. Consider, how the holy Scripture saith: *Blessed is the man, who suffers temptation, for when he shall haue beene tryed, he is to receiue the Crowne of life, which God promised to them, who loue him.* If the Crowne contente you, let not the tryall displease you; and there can be no triall without temptation; and no temptation of troubles can be coming towards you, which passes not from the hand of God, who is your father; and who measures out so much thereof, as may be fitt, and neither to fall short in respect of your profit, nor to ouerflowe in respect of your weakenesse.

Iacob 1.

Feare not to drinke with patience, of that, which God dranke with loue. And God himselfe saith to vs; *My sonne, doe not cast thyself into anguish, when thou art corrected by Almighty God. For hee corrects him, whome he loues, as the father doth the sonne, in whome hee delights.* And elsewhere he saith: *Doe not despise thyselfe in thy weakenesse, but pray to God, and hee will cure thee.* And now, since we are commaunded, on the parte of God, that whatsoeuer happen, we must not be dismayed, let vs make our recourse to him, vpon the confidence, which we haue in his word; and let vs beg his fauour, which hee cannot fayle to asforde.

Prom. 3.

Heb. 12.
Eccl. 38

O filter, and if we could but see, how deare and precious we are in the eyes of God ! Oh that we could but see, how deeply he holdes vs lodged in his hart, and how neare we are to him, when we may perhaps conceiue our selues to be cast furthest of ! Blessed be our lord *Iesus Christ*, for hee it is, whome with a full mouth we proclaime to be our hope. Nothing can so fright me, as hee can secure me. Let me be changed from deuout to slacke, and tepide : from going towards the comforts of heauen, to goe towards the darkeneise of the blacke pirt of hell. Let mee be enuironed by my sinnes, which are past, and by feares, which may bee to come : let the deuills accuse me, and lay snares for me : let men persecute and fright me, let them threaten me with hell and, lay ten thousand dangers before me, and yet after all this, by sighing, and sobbing for my sinnes, and by casting mine eyes vp to Christ our lord, desiring helpe at his hands, (that lord, who is so meeke, so benigne, so full of mercie, and that most firme and faithfull loue of mine, euen to death) and I cannot be perswaded, to disconfide ; especially when I consider, that I was valued at so high a rate, that God himself was giuen for me.

O Christ, thou haue of securitie for all them, who being brused and battered by the tempestuous waues of their owne harts, and flye to thee for succour ! O thou fountai-

ne of living waters, to those stags, who are embossed, and pincht by those spirituall dogs, which are the deuills, and their owne sinnes. Thou art that profound internall rest, the hope, which neuer fayled, the protection of orphans, and the defence of widowes. Thou art that firme house of stone, which giuest receipt to those porcupines, which are so full of roughnesse, and sharpenesse, through their sinnes, if with groanes, and desire of pardon, they fly towards thee. Thou defendest vs from the wrath of God, to which we are subiect. And although sometimes thou commaundest thy Disciples to enter into the sea without thee, that so they may be weaned by litle and litle frō thy sweete conuersatiō; & though, when thou art absent, such tempests of the sea may rise, as to putt the soule into hazard of being lost, yet still thou forgettest them not. Thou biddest them departe from thee, and yet euen very then, thou goest to pray for them. They thinke, thou hast layed them aside, and that thou sleepest; and then art thou vpon thy knees for them. And when three partes of the night were already past, and when it seemed to thy infinite wisdomē, that then thou hadst kept them long enough in paine, through thy absence, and that then they had continued in that tempest long enough, thou descendedst from the mountaines; and as the true Lord of those vnconstant waues, thou walkedst vpon them, (for all is firme vnder thy feete) and thou

Psal.
103.

Mat.
6.

Math.

14.

drewest neare thy seruants, when they thought thee farthest of from them; and thou vtteredst these words of confidence to them : *It is I; be not affrayed.*

O Christ our lord, thou diligent and carefull pastour of thy sheepe, and how much is that soule in error, who will not confide in thee, and through thee, from the most profound internall parte of the hart; if withall he can be content to amende his life, and to serue thee? O that thou wouldst but let men know, how much reason, they haue, who come to giue themselues to thy seruice, not to be dismayed, vnder the conduct of such a Captaine; and that there is noe accident, which ought to putt anie seruant of thine, into so great affliction and feare, as the newes of what thou art ought to giue them comfort. If thou, O lord, wert well knowne, there is no soule, which would not loue thee and confide in thee, vnlesse it were strangely wicked.

For this it is, that thou sayst : *It is I, therefore doe not feare.* I am he, who kill, and giue life : I cast men downe, as low as hell, and I draw them back againe; that is, I afflict a man till he thinkes, he dyes and then againe I refresh, I recreate, and I giue him life. I cast men into certaine discomforts, which seeme hell to them : but when they are there, I forgett them not, but I fetch them from thence, and they are but therefore mortified, that they may be quickened. I sende them not thither, to

remayne there, but that their entry into that shadow of hell, may be a meanes to make them escape the substance of that true hell after death, and that they may fly vp to heauen. I am he, who can deliuer you from all affliction, for I am of infinite power. And I am he, who will deliuer you, for I am of infinite goodnesse; and I am he, who know how to do it, for I am of infinite wisdom. I am your Aduocate for I embraced your cause as mine owne. I am your surety, for I haue made myself subiect to all your debts. I am your Lord, who haue purchased you with mine owne bloud; and with no meaning to forgett you, but to doe you honour, if you will serue me, because you were bought at so high a price. I am he, who haue so profoundly loued you, that for the loue of you, I haue bene contented to be transformed into you, and to become passible and mortall. I, who in mine owne nature, was very farre from being subiect to such miserie. I am he, who deliuered myself ouer to innumerable torments of bodie, and farre greater torments of minde, that you might take hart to endure some for loue of me, and to confide, that you shall in fine, be freed from them, since I am he, who vnder-take it. I am your Father, as I am God, and your elder-brother, as I am man. I am your Christ, & your redemption, and what feare can you then haue of your debts, if by penance,

and Confession, you demaunde a generall release of them? I am your reconciliation, and of whose wrath can you then be afraide? I am that true-loues-knott of friendshipp, and how then can you thinke, that you are fallen out with God? I am your defender: and what opposites can you apprehende? I am your freind, and how then doe you feare, that you can want anie thing, which I haue, vnlesse you will needes departe from me?

My bodie, and my bloud is yours: and why then doe you feare hunger? nay, my verie hart is yours, and why then doe you feare to be forgotten? yea and my diuinitie is yours, and what doubt can you then haue of miserie? For accessories vnto that Principall, my Angells are yours to defende you. My Saints are yours, to pray for you. My *blessed mother* is yours, to be the carefull and indulgent mother of you all. The earth is yours, that you may serue me vpon it. The heauen is yours, for you shall enioy it, and me in it. The deuills, and hell is also yours, for you shall treade it and them vnder foote, like slaues, who are chayned vp in that prison. This life is yours, because with it you gett another, which shall neuer ende. Your honest entertainements and delights are yours. For you direct them to my glorie. Your paynes are yours, for you endure them for my loue, and for your owne true good. Your temptations are yours, because they are occasion of your meritt, and of an euerlasting Crowne in hea-

uen. Your death is yours, because it is to be the immediate steppes to your eternall life.

And all these things you possesse in me; and by my meanes; For neither did I gaine them for myself alone; neither will I enioy them alone; for when I putt myself into your companie by taking your flesh vpon me, I did it, to make you partakers of all the meritt, which I should acquire by my labours, my fasting, eating, sweating, weeping, and by the enduring of all my torments and death, if the fault be not your owne.

Now, you cannot account yourself poore, who possesse so great riches, if you doe not wittingly throw them away, by your wicked life. Be not dismayed; for I will not forsake you. It is true, that you are no better, then some thinne glasses; but I will holde you fast in my hand. Your weakenesse setts of, my strength the more. From your sinnes and miseries, I draw the manifestation of my goodnesse, and mercie. There is nothing, which shall be able to hurt you, if you will loue me, and confide in me. Thinke not of me according to your owne opinion, and the iudgments, which are made by flesh and bloud; but thinke of me by a strong faith with loue; nor by the apparance of exteriour signes, but by that hart of mine, which was opened for you vpon the Crosse, that you might dismiss all doubt, whether you are beloued by me or no, forasmuch as concernes my parte; since you see such workes of loue

Iohn.
18.

without, and a hart, which was so wounded by that launce within; and yet more wounded by my loue.

How shall I denye myself to them, who seeke me, to do me honour; since I went out to that way, where those others sought me to offend me. I offered myself to ropes and chaines, which afflicted me; and shall I refuse myself to the hart and armes of Christians, where I desire to repose? I yeilded myself to those scourges, and to that hard pillar; and shall I denye myself to that soule, which will be subiect to me? I turned not away my face from him, who strooke me; and shall I turne it away from him, who will holde himself happy, that he may beholde and adore me. What little confidence is this, that seing me to be voluntarily torne in pieces by the hād of dogs, for the loue of my children, yet those children should be doubtfull, whether I loue them, or no, though they be confessed to loue me?

Matt.

9.

Matt.

11.

Consider, o yee sonnes of men, and tell me, whome I euer despised, if he desired to be well with me? whome haue I abandoned, if he called on me? from whome haue I fled, if he sought me? I conuersed, and I fedde with sinners: yea I called, and I iustified them, who were forlorne, and euen fowle in sinne. Nay, I am importunate to winne their harts, who loue me not. I make myself a beggar to all the world, and what cause is there then to suspect me of forgettfullnesse towards my children,

when there is so great diligence vsed both, to loue me, and to make expression of that loue? And though I may cōceale it sometimes, yet do I not leaue to loue; but euen for the very loue, I beare to my creatures, I couer it; for whome nothing is so good, as not to know any thing, which concernes themselves, but to remitt themselves wholly to me. In that ignorance, doth their knowledge consist; in that suspence, their strength, and in that subiection, their dominion. And it ought to suffice a soule, that it lyes in no other hands but mine, which are also hers, since for her they were nayled vpon the Crosse. Yea, they are more hers, then mine, since they laboured more for the purchase of her good, then of mine owne. And to the ende, that I may draw her out of all self conceipt, and make her follow my direction; it is I, who conduct her into this darkenesse, that so she may know nothing of herself. But yet still if she putt her confidence in me, and departe not from my seruice, I will deliuer her, and I will glorifye her; and all this will I performe to her. *Be faithfull to death, and I will giue thee the Crowne of life.*

Psal.
90.

This sayth our Lord to all faithfull soules, and this he sayth to yours, which I pray God to keepe. Amen.

A Letter to a Lady, who was a Religious woman, and in great affliction. He shewes; how troubles are the prooffe of Faith and Loue in the seruants of God; and how confident they ought to be of his Diuine Maiessty in the midst of their troubles.

AS soone as I receiued your letter, I offered thanks to our lord, for hauing giuen you a signe, that your vocation came from his hand; and this signe is, that you haue suffered tribulation. You must not be a little glad of this, since our Lord loues you. Nor yet must you be slack, since you are in the midst of many dangers; butt carry your eye towardes him, whoe hath called you with soe great loue. You must alsoe haue a strong hart. For he called you not with intention to giue you ouer in the midst of your iourney; but to guide you vnder the protection of his owne wings, till he may haue conducted you to heauen, where you shall see his face. Let not the Faith of Christ our Lord, nor the loue you owe him sleepe in you; for he neuer sleepe, when there is question of doeing you anie good.

These are tokens, which he vses to sende, to whome he loues, to trye, if they also loue him in their afflictions, and if they confide in him in their dangers. That spouse is not worthy of thanks, who loues her fellow-spouse

but onely when he is present with her , nor doth it cost her much to confide in him ; when she findes herselfe regaled by him. But the matter is , that , when he absentes himself from her , yea and when he seemes to haue forgotten her , she must loue him so much the better , as he is further absent from her , and confide in him so much the more ; as she hath fewer exterior signes of his fauour.

It is enough for you , my good sister , to haue knowen alreadie by experience , how louing our lord hath beene to you , by his hauing drawn you to the knowledge of himself. And be you not crauing new testimonies of his loue , but make yourself sure enough thereof , and be not troubled ; although he correct you , and though it seeme , as if he estranged himself from you , and forgott you ; but rather say thus : *He hath a minde to trye me , and not to oppresse me.* You must loue our lord , though he correct you ; you must confide in him , though you feele no comfort from him. Seeke him , though he hide himself ; suffer him not to rest , till you haue waked him , and till he confesse , that you are faithfull in his absence : and thus you shall finde him to returne to you , with so much aduantage , as that , when you enioy his presence againe , you will esteeme your former afflictions well employed.

Procure great courage , wherewith to suffer ; for after the rate of your sorrowes , shall your comforts be. Be not a louer of yourself : but

be a louer of God : loose yourself , and see you shall bee sure to finde yourself. And if once yow would bud trust God home , and if once you would offer yourselfe to him with true loue , there could nothing happen , which would fright you. All bitter frozen afflictions proceede but from distrust in God. And for this our lord sayde : *Let not your harts bee troubled, and doe not leave. You beleue in God : beleue also in me.* So that *Faith* and *loue* is the cause of peace and quietnesse to the hart.

Num.
13.

There is no one thing , which is so necessarie for you , towards the making you able to arriue at the ende of that dayes worke , wherein God hath placed you , as to confide in him with loue. Our lord hath manie proofes to make of you : and manie tribulations shall growe , where you looke least for them : but if you stand armed with *Faith* and *loue* , you shall ouercome them all. Doe but remember, how the children of *Israel* , when they were issued out of the land of *Egypt* , by meanes of so manie miracles , and were passing through so manie afflictions , before they arriued at that land , which our lord had promised them , sayd thus : *The people , which possesse this land , is greater and stronger , then we; they haue mightie Citties , whose walles doe euen threaten the skye : we cannot ouercome such a stout nation as this : to what ende doe we putt ourselues vpon this iournie ? And though some amongst*

them, who had *Faith*, did encourage the rest by saying: that since God was on their side, they should easily be able to overcome, as they had done till then: yet feare prevailed so farre, as that they offended our Lord thereby, and through their little confidence, they lost the land, and God destroyed them in the desert, without suffering them to enjoy that, for which they had laboured, and which himself had promised.

Let vs take warning, my good Sister, by the danger of others, and let vs knowe, that our Lord hath gust in such as feare him, and hope in his mercie: and is offended with such, as doe not so. It is he, who drew you out of the captiuitie of Egypt, when hee inspired your hart with a desire of being his; and he leades you still through this desert, which is so vnpleasant: where sometimes you want the bread of doctrine for lacke of such, as might breake it to you: At other times you want companie, which may speake of spirituall things, that so your way might bee made to seeme the shorter: At other times you doe want the trees of other recreation, which might giue you shade: and thus in steede of these commodities, you haue a thousand discomforts. Now temptations rise against you from within, and then from without: now from strangers, and then from domestiques. Butt yett attende you onely

Psal.
147.

to your businesse. For he, who did that for you, which was *more*, can neuer sayle to do that for you, which is *lesse*. He, who made you a friend of an enemy, will better keepe you now, when you are his friend. He, who did not abandon you, when you fled from him, will much lesse flye now from you, when you follow him.

Who is he, that can say with anie truth, that God did not helpe him, if he were desired? See you haue no feare, O you seruant of *Christ*, in any thing, which may happen to you: but confide in him, who loued you so well, as to dye for you. It is true, that you haue but one, who protects you: but that one is of much more power, then all they, who contradict you. Do not thinke, of, how great the gyants, and how strong the citties are, which you must encounter: for it is not you, who must fight, *But holde you your peace, and our lord will fight for you.* Do not fly from the warre, nor abandon yourself, as one, who were ouercome, *and so you shall see the fauour of our lord towards you.* For in this warre, he onely looses the battaile, who quitts the field. It is true, that you are weake, *but in that weakenesse of yours God will shew his strength.* It is true that you know not much: but God himself will be your guide. By your miseries, God will make ~~your~~ mercies appeare. Whoe are you, that you should be able to passe through such difficulties? But yet say with *Dauid*: *In the strength of my God I will leape*

Nu. 14.

Ps. 117.

ouer a wall: Who are you, that should be able to fight? but yet say with him againe: *Though thousands should rise against me, yet my hart shall not feare.* Beleue, my good sister, that how much the harder this businesse is for you, so much the easier it is for Almighty God. And therefore you must haue great distrust in respect of your owne weakenesse: but great confidence withall, in God's strength. Infalibly hee will crowne yow, if yow continue in his loue: and if you doe confide, that by his grace, you shall obtaine that crowne.

Psa. 26

Mat. 10

Forgett not this promise of Christ our lord: him, who confesses me before men, that man will I confesse before my Father, who is in heauen: but him, who denyes me before men, that men will I also denye before my Father, who is in heauen. Can you thinke, that one is to esteeme that for affliction, which he endures for the confession of Christ our lord, since it is to haue so high a reward as that with so much honour he shall be crowned by him at the day of iudgement before his father? Happie is that sufferance: happie that dishonour and pouertie, to which so high an honour doth succcede. What kinde of ioy will it be for you, O my good sister, to heare these wordes from the mouth of Christ our lord himself, and that in presence of the whole world: *Come you blessed of my Father, and possesse the kingdome, which is pre-*

Mat. 15.

ps. 12.

pared for you? What will it be, when the Angells shall thus sing to her, who hath beene a faithfull seruant of that Celestiall king: *Come, o Spouse of Christ, receiue that crowne, which our lord hath prepared for thee: and that not for one day, but for all eternitie.* What will the spouses of Christ our lord conceaue, when hauing passed through the sea of this life, and their enemies, who disturbed vs, remayning drowned therein; they shall sing thus with great ioy, for hauing runne through this dangerous world, without being ouerwhelmed with the vices thereof; *The snare is broken, and we are deliuered: our helpe is in the name of our lord.* What a day will that be, when that true Marie, the virgin of virgins, shall goe before with her Timbrell, which is her sacred bodie, praying God both in bodie and soule, and singing thus: *Come, magnifye our lord with me, and lett vs exalte his name in mutuall society with one another.*

Happie are you, if you be found faithfull to the *spouse*, who chose you. Happie are you, if you haue the courage to cast away that, which is present. vnder the most certaine promise of *Christ* our lord, for that, which is future. Be confident, my good sister, in taking his word: for you are not the first, to whome hee hath passed it, and fulfilled it: neither shall you be she, with whome that word shall want effecte. He gaue his word to saynt Catherine, saynt Agnes, saynt Barbara and saynt Lucie,

and to innumerable other ladie virginis : and tell me now how completely he hath performed it. They had the courage to despise the poore present world : and you see , that now they raigne with God. They liued heere in trouble ; and they are now in an eternitie of repose. Through how manie combats did they passe ? and they now enioy the euerlasting crownes of their conquests. They fled from spouses of the earth : and they brought the king of heauen to bee in loue with them.

If they had followed the trace of this world , their delight had beene alreadie past, and their memories would haue beene forgotten. But they loued that , which was eternall ; and therefore their felicitie shall not dye : and their memorie shall not decay. They were written in the booke of God : and therefore neither water nor winde , nor fire , nor time can make them waste. For that booke is incorruptible : and so is the name , which is written in it.

You must therefore procure to haue a strong hart towards God , whoe is your saluation : and doe not thinke , that hee selles heauen deare to you : for you haue not yet shed your blood for him , as those others shed theirs. Our lord treates you like a weake creature : and you should bee a shamed to haue giuen him such cause. If you had had more faith and confidence in him,

and more loue to suffer for him, he would haue procured you more afflictions, to the ende, that you might haue purchased richer Crownes. Do not content yourself with suffering litle, considering how great your rewarde shall be, and how much Christ our Lord suffered for you, He gaue his life for you, and he was deeply tormented and despised. How then come you thus to complaine of the touch of a flye? doe but loue, and you will desire to suffer. Let your loue be doubled, and you will suffer sorowes, which are doubled. The loue of our Lord makes such as possesse it, more greedie of suffering, then the loue of ones selfe, of reposing. It makes, that anie burden weighes light, for loue is stronger then death. He, who loues not, groanes vnder the burden, like some lazie beast; but he, who loues, runnes and flyes, and it suffers him not to feeble the weight euen of his owne bodie, nor of whatsoeuer else they can lay vpon it.

It is not, my good Sister, that the afflictions, which we suffer, are great; but that our loue is litle. The weight of a pound is no great weight; but yet lay it vpon some litle childe, and he will say: *O how heauie it weighes*? whereas if a man tooke it vp, he would scarce feeble it. And so take you it for a signe, that if you loue litle, your afflictions will weigh heauy vpon you; but if you loue much, you will scarce allowe them to be afflictions. For you will be so inebriated with loue, that nothing can be able to distract

you from the taste thereof. You will finde a good sauour in the very suffering it self, *and you will draw water out of the rocke; and hony out of the stonie hilles.*

Num.
20.

Doe but loue, and you shall not be subiect to afflictions, but you shall be superiour to them as their lady; & you shall prayse him, who deli- uers you frō them. *If they threaten you with death, you will bid it wellcome, that so you may enjoy true life. If with bannishment, you will say, That you esteeme yourself bannished, wheresoeuer you are, till you may arrive to see the face of God. And that it im- ports you little, whether you goe to heauen from this or that parte of the earth; And that if you haue God in your companie, wheresoeuer you are, you shall be hap- pie; and if not, your owne country will giue you mi- serie enough. If you see yourself contemned, say: Christ our Lord is my honour, and he honours me; let the world despise me, so hee value me.*

Doe not afflict yourself about the necessity, which you may sustaine of present things; for of yourself you must despise them, through the desire, which you haue, to liue in conformity with Christ our Lord, who made himself a poore man for you. What is there in the world, which ough to fright you? if the loue of Christ our Lord haue wounded you, you will treade the deuill vnder foote, you will despise his threatens, and you will passe with courage, through all your enemies. Put your trust in him, who loues his louers. There is nothing, which you will not be able to doe in him. Go,

and buy whatsoeuer you want of him, though he aske you all this world for it; & see, that you be not found without the loue of him, though it should cost you your life. *He is a hidden treasure; but he, who findes him, selles all, to buy him.* For in him alone, he findes himself more rich, then with the multitude of all other things.

And now, if it concerne euery one of vs to loue him, how much more doth it importe, that she doe it, whome he hath chosen for his spouse. It becomes the *seruant* to feare his *Maister*, and the *sonne* to honour his *father*; but the *Spouse* to Loue her *fellow spouse*. See you loue our Lord; and take no rest, till he haue, graunted you this giift. Loue him with reuerence; for that is the kinde of loue, which he likes. Esteeme not him the lesse, because he communicates himself to you; but wonder, how so great an altitude, as his, can stoope to such a profound basenesse as yours. It is the propertie of ill-natured and ill-mannerd seruants, to value their Maisters at a lesse rate, for vouchsafing to descende, and become familiar with them, then if they had liued with them like Lords. But they who liue in true light, esteeme that Lord so much the more, as he doth the more vouchsafe to diminish himself.

The true loue of Christ our Lord carries this badge with it, in token that it is indeede of him. That as it apprehendes and highly esteemes the goodnesse of God; so it also apprehendes and profoundly disesteemes the wic-

kednesse of man. Therefore loue, adore, and serue our Lord *with ioy, but yet reioyce with trembling*; Not a trembling as of a slaue in the midst of torments; but as of a true and tenderhearted childe; who highly feares to giue any disgust to her father; how litle soeuer it may bee.

Of yourself you can doe none of these things; but if you humble your hart in the acknowledgement of your owne miseries, if you present yourselfe often in *prayer* before Christ our Lord; if you lodge him in your breast by the *Communion*; if you heare him speake to you in your *spirituall reading*; and in fine, if you will but giue him leaue to helpe you, you are to haue confidence, that by litle & litle, he will be healing your soule, notwithstanding all the harsh encounters, which may occurre.

Doe not starte out of his hands, though the cure putt you to payne; for, in fine, he will worke the cure at the fittest time; And for the afflictions, which he sendes you, and the delights, whereof he deprives you, he will giue you his owne most plentiefull delight, which shall inebriate you, as if it were with some swelling riuer, and you shall be in full ioy for all eternitie, without the want of anie good, and without the feare of loosing, what you haue. You shall there finde yourself to be highly well content and payde; and more felicity shall be imparted to you, then yourself could tell, how to

desire. Which felicity is not a creature, but the Creatour himself of all things, that true God, who liues and raignes for the eternity of all eternities. Amen.

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*A Letter of the Authour to a Lady. He shewes how Christ our Lord, being placed vpon the Crosse, is that glasse, wherein wee may see all the spots of our soules, and wherein wee may alsoe finde the cure of all our miseries. And that it is an enterprise of great honour to bee carrying a part of his Crosse.*

**I**F in the night of the Nativity of our Lord, they carried you to Mount Caluary, and haue giuen you compassion to the Crucifix, and teares wherewith to wash his feete; it may well be beleiued that now, when you are in Lent, and neere the time, wherein the holy passion of our Lord is represented, he will keepe you, as such a fixed Inhabitant of that hill, as to suffer you to depart noe more from thence. This is such a thing, as that you may safely say with Saint Peeter, *it is good for vs to bee heere*; and it shall be a better suite to our Lord, then his was. For he desired to remaine *on that hill*, where repose and delight were to be found; but in this other, there is affliction; and therefore this carries a testimony with it, of greater loue. For not in resting, but in labouring, and suffering, is the loue of our Lord employed and shewed.

Do you, Lady, remaine in those woundes

of our Lord, since for the cure of your woundes he accepted his. And though you be not to endure the like for his sake; yet let them serue you at least to make you thanke him, and to lament him, and to haue compassion on him, since your sinnaes, are they which placed him, in soe extreame distresse. Continue there, and passe not on, with such haste as you would doe by some ill-provided country inne. *They whoe passed on by their owne way, shooke their heads and blasphemed our Lord.* But fixe you yourselfe close by the *Crosse*, like that virgin-mother, and like that *beloued disciple*, and those other holy women. For they who runn ouer this soe great benefit, in such haste, doe neither vnderstand it, nor thankfully acknowledge it; and there remayne noe more with them, but the meere sound thereof. And some (that is such as are Infidells) blaspheme him for it; because they stay not to looke, at leasure, vpon this mighty wonder of loue.

John. 19

But the Christian, who hath taken vp his lodging heere, sayth, and that from his very hart, *This is my rest for euer, and for euer will I dwell heere, because I haue chosen it.* And if the *sponse*, shall not remaine with, at least, her hart nailed to that *Crosse*, to which the body of her fellow-sponse was nailed; how will shee possibly bee able to escape the name of vngratefull, and vnkinde? There shall you finde remedye, against the poyson of those false prayses, which men giue you. And you will profoundly bee ashamed

to perceiue yourself honoured, & proclaimed for good, whē you see him, who indeede is good, & holy, to be proclaimed for wicked, & false. There, shall you see, how little reason you haue, to think, that what you doe is vnworthy of estimation in any kinde; forasmuch as concernes your part thereof, since it is soe weake, & lame, when it is cōpared with that which Christ our Lord, wrought vpon the *Crosse*; yea, & euen with that which yourself, as you are, ought to doe.

Looke into this glasse, and you will easily be able to discerne the spots, which are in the face of your soule. For when you haue beene the most *meeke* of all, if you compare that *meeknes*. with his, your meekenes will be noe better, then meere wrath; and your obedience compared with his, will be very disorderly; and your humility very proud. Yet the blind world will needes beleiue, that there are noe other finnes, but those, which it conceiues to be such. Whereas the eyes of God are of another kinde, and he measures vs by another rule; whereby many times he findes that to bee faulty which seemed in the eyes of men to bee excellētly, and cōpleatly done. When therefore they shall deliuer out any of these poisoned, & smooth-lying prayses, say you instātly in your hart, as *S. Paule* did, *he who iudges me is our Lord*. And make haste to call to minde, how our Lord was proclaimed for a wicked person. And beseech him, not to permitt that you be published for one who is good, & be sure you hould your tōgue, for our

1. Cor.

4.

lord will obserue how the world goes. Nay procure you, & be carefull that when you are despised, you may be very glad thereof, and perhaps our lord doth not now permit any body to giue you ill words, because he findes, that you haue not strength wherewith to beare them.

He who desires any part of the *Crosse* of our lord, must receiue it, as he would doe some pretious *Relique*; with great reuerence, & giuing of thanks. And he must valew it more, then he would all the treasures of the world. And because there are soe few who esteeme of those *Reliques* of the *Crosse* as they ought, therefore our Lord oftentimes doth not impart them; whose pleasure is that they be honoured, and beloued, and borne with ioy. And for this reason it is, that he leaues vs still in our infancy, without putting vs to the taskes of men. But how much more then, are we to blame, if we be drawne downe to impatience, or superfluity of sorrow, for any of those things, which he sendes.

Soe that if you shall carry a great loue to the *Crucifix*, he will giue you a part of his *Crosse*. But then see, that you embrace it, as an enterprise of great honour, according to what he sayth to the *sponse*, *Place mee as a seale vpon thy hart: and vpon thine arme; for loue is strong as death.* And as for that paine wherein you are, because you may not receiue the *Body* of our Lord in the *blessed Sacrament*. soe often as you would; be not troubled thereat. For I haue already tould you that our Lord is resolved that it shall cost you some what. And it is but reason that it doe soe, since

our soules cost him soe much. Doe you thinke perhaps that by our Lords onely saying, *Let all soules bee mine*, they instantly render themselves into his hands. Doe you thinke that the loue which you carry to our Lord, & the dominion which he exercises ouer you cost him but toyes? I can assure you it is not soe. But he shed his blood, as any slaue might doe, vpon condition, that your soules might be his, and he yours.

Iust soe, must that soule doe, which hath a minde to obtaine him; that is, it must sweate first, it must weepe, it must importune him, it must endure ill wordes, yea and alsoe euill deedes at the hands of others; yea and it must seeme little to haue endured this, but once. And if it be not put to endure them, at least it shall haue gained much in hauing disposed it selfe, to suffer somewhat for him, & thus it proues, noe fruitlesse thing to seeke God. Negotiate your businesse with him, for if he say *Yea*, there is none who can hinder it, and if any body offer to doe it, it will not proue with him; but yet, if it chaunce to proue, you may conclude thereby, that you haue not negotiated well, with our Lord. What shall I say to you? Cry out louder to him: Follow my counsaile; and whensoever he giues you a great desire to communicate, procure then to be, iust as if you were communicating indeed. And beseech our Lord, since he is omnipotent, that he will giue you that, when you communicate *spiritually*, which he would haue giuen, if you had communicated *Sacramentally*.

*mentally.* For soe, you shall bee pleasing to his goodnes; and he will not suffer you to goe empty from him, if you come well prepared, and it were not the worse if it might betwixt or three dayes before. Yett now you must not thinke, that you may therefore faile, to confesse your sinnes afterward, to your Ghostly Father. But till you haue meanes to declare them to him, I aduise, that you relate them to our Lord. And aboue all things, keepe your hart in peace and conserue yourself in the way of obedience, and humility, towards your Superiours, and Prelates. For this is the way of our Lord, and you must take heede you leaue it not. Take courage to passe on, in your other deuotions. For though, when you are in them, you thinke you make noe profit by them, I say you doe; and afterwards you shall taste the fruite thereof. And our Lord will find a time to looke back with pittie vpon such as shall haue made much way after him. And one day, of those, when our Lord vouchsafes to looke back vpon vs, is worth more then three, of those others, wherein we laboured to goe after him. The crowne is prepared for you in heauen. God will be your defendour, and will not forget you. Perseuer you in obedience, *till you see our Lord of all Lords in Syon.* I beseech him to make you dearly his; and that you may be kept safe, and proue a saynt. Amen.

*Psal.*  
83.



*A Letter of the Authour to a Ca-  
uallier, a freind, and a Disci-  
ple of his.*

Gen.  
17.

**F**OR what doe spurres serue, if the beast be so lazic, as I am? And then adding to this the burden, which lyes vpon me, of litle health; it is no maruaile, if I neither write, nor answer. This letter is written in such straytes of time, that I know not, whether it can be good for any thing, or noe. I haue reioyced much, that the *Infant is weaned*; though some dye at that age; as not hauing strength, to eate the *bread*, with the *crust*. But since our Lord takes you, for a *Childe of promise*; as he did *Isaac*, I hope in *Iesus Christ*, that you will not dye of it, though you should be putt to eate stones; but that you will feede vpon them; as Christ our Lord, fedde vpon the *wine*, with *myrrhe*.

God will deliuer you from consenting to sinne, and your temptations shall serue you, in steede of the torment of the *Crosse*, for his glorie, who dyed vpon it. And though our enemies may bid vs come downe, we will rather choose to confesse Christ our Lord, by continuing vpon it; then to putt ourselues into ease, by denying him.

You are acquainted alreadie, with that supreme omnipotent goodnesse of our Celestiall Father, whose power is such, as to draw good out of euill, and heate out of colde. And therefore be not dismayde, though you see yourself absent, from the protection of your spirituall Father, on earth; and though you finde barrennesse, where you expected plentie, and abondance.

Bee not afrayde to be alone with Christ our Lord, not that you are to vnder-value helpe, when it may bee had, by meanes of his seruants; but we must obey his ordinance, whensoever he shall be pleased, that we remaine in this world, without succour. Because our Lord is vsually wont in such cases to doe more visible, and greater fauours, immediately, then he did before by meanes of his seruants. And such a man comes to learne, that, *Non sum solus, quia Pater mecum est. I am not alone, because my Father is with me.* Then, Faith beginnes to encrease, and Prayer dilates it self by Loue; which is sett forward, by seing, how the soule is beloued. And thus it encreases by that, by which it seemed, and it was feared, that it would be diminished. And he findes society, when he is alone; and he hath learnt to walke without a staffe, though he be but weake.

Let there be no want of care, to receiue him, who is *all our good*; and be you euer saying, and that with truth: *Loquere Domine, quia*

John:  
16.

1. King

1.

*audis seruus tuus*, Speake, Lord, for thy seruant heares thee. Shutt vp yourself in the castle of your hart, which, though it be as weake, as glasse, yet he, who comes to dwell there, will make it so strong, that all that, shall proue glasse, which can assault it; and it self shall remaine more firme, then stele. And for lacke of doing this, the soule is full of weakenesse, and it may say, that, which is written: *Diuisum est cor eorum, nunc interibunt. Their hart is diuided, and they shall instantly perish.*

Osee 10

Iohn.

20.

There is no place secure, where your hart may rest, but in that secret place of retireate, that most hidden corner, where none can enter, but Christ our Lord, *iannus clausis, the doores being shut.* For if it departe from thence, it runnes as great hazard, as some light yong mayde might doe amongst dissolute men. And if some iust punishment, were imposed, & well executed, for euery time, that the hart should be gadding vp and downe the streete, perhaps we should take warning by ourselues, as euen a very horse, or mule will doe. Though indeede a man, who watches himself well, shall instantly be able to finde a punishment, which comes downe from heauen, vpon the very hart itself, *quando diligit mouere pedes, when it hath a minde to be gadding; and then that, which folloves, is this: & Domino non placuit.*

Iere. 14.

This guift of recollection, must be gotten with much practise. For afterward the hart will stay within, euen of it self, though we open

the doore, to let it out; as a tame bird, will stay in a cage. And this is the roote of all our spirituall profit, and at the feete of Christ our Lord, we must haue it, if we meane, that it shall be *true profit*. Christ Iesus be with vs all. Amen.

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A Letter of the Authour to a Ladie, encouraging her to fight the battailes of our Lord. He shewes the subtilty of the deuill, and how slyly he tempts soules with pride.

MADAME, because I conceiue that you fight the combatts of Christ our Lord, and doe franckely offer yourself to all affliction, so that he may raigne in your hart: all encouragement and assistance is due to you, from such, as be the seruants of God, who are commaunded to aduertise the wicked man of the miserie, which is growing towards him, that so he may amende, and auoyde it; and to encourage such as are good; and to goe sounding the trumpett before them, when they see them entring into the battaile; that is to say, they are to giue hart by the word of God, to such, as they perceiue to fight for his honour. For otherwise, as account shall be demaunded of them, for the *wicked*, whome they had not warned, so also for the *good*, whome they had not encouraged. And so they should be puni-

Esay,
58.

Ezech. 3

shed both for the euill, which were committed by the one, and for the good, which were omitted by the other.

Take you therefore hart, in that combatt, which the ancient Serpent makes against you, he procuring, to diuide you from God, and you resolving to sticke close to him: you must be very watchfull; for his chiefe ayme, is at the hart. And it troubles him not greatly, that a man serue God, by recollecting his eyes, by keeping silence, by praying, by singing the *diuine office*, and the like; but to the hart doth he conuey his poyson; which is a certaine vaine kinde of complacence, or proper estimation, and loue of ourselues. The *foolish virgins*, were *virgins*; but because *they had no oyle in their lampes*, they heard this sad word out of the mouth of our Lord. *In the word of truth I say to you, that I know you not.* Now, what is this *lampe*, but the *hart*? and what is this *oyle*, but the *spirit of truth*, which maintaynes and feedes it with good workes if we meane, that they shall indeede be good, in the sight of God? And what is this *Spirit of truth*, but that, which makes a man displeasing to himselfe, and to seeme ill in his owne eyes; and that from his very hart, and soule, he may conceiue, that he is all vglie, and abominable, and that he is amazed to consider, how God can suffer him vpon the earth?

Matth
23.

. This is that *truth*, where in we must liue,

and without this, we lye in lyas. And sometimes, the more vertue we thinke we haue, and the better we esteeme ourselues in health, the more sicke, and miserable we be, through the want of this. For confiding in ourselues, we thinke we are somewhat; whereas indeede it is not soe, in his sight, who discernes our harts, and saith: *Thou hast the name of one, who liues, whereas indeede thou art dead.* He hath the name of one, that liues: who falles not into publike sinnes, which the world condemnes for enormous. But if neuerthelesse, he fall into other sinnes, which are condemned in the iudgement of Almighty God; for what doth it serue him, to be absolved by the world, when he is censured by that iust Iudge?

Apoc.
3.

The world, knowes not, how to holde that man for wicked, nor to punish him for such, who onely hath a good opinion, and complacence in himself with pride, or at least is not displeasing to himself; but in the iudgement of God, that man is held for proude, and blinde, who doth not, euen stinke to himself, as if he carried some dead dog, tyed to his nose; and who hath not a profound internall shame, in the sight of his Creatour; as heere men vse to haue, when they are presented before some Iudge, hauing beene taken, in the manner, with enormous crimes. And if this pride arriue to be a mortall sinne, then doth it wholly square, & agree to him, which was said before, in the

Hier. 3.

person of God ; and if it be but veniall , this
 suites with him but in parte. *Thou hast the face
 of a harlott , and knowest not , what belongs to the
 hauing of any shame.* Now it is an ill fauoured
 spott in a soule , to be voyde of shame , as it is
 euen exteriorly , when women want it.

The world condemnes not a man's confi-
 dence in himself, nor the estimation , which he
 may haue of himself, nor a resolute will, which
 he may haue to procure his owne contentmēt.
 But in the sight of God , these and such other
 things are great offences , and they hinder gra-
 ce, and our friendship with him, if they be *mor-
 tal* ; and if they be but *venial* ; yet they hinder
 the profit , which we might make of the gra-
 ce, we haue ; and it destroyes all inward com-
 munication with our Lord. The deuill know-
 ing this, it troubles him not much, that a soule
 may be aliue, after the large manner , if inte-
 riorly , and spiritually it be dead. And many
 times he procures not , that such a person may
 fall into apparant, and deformed sinnes ; for if
 he should cōmitt any such, he would be much
 confounded thereat. For, obseruing , that he
 had done things, which euen , in the eyes of
 the world were so wicked , he would take pe-
 nance to hart , and would be displeasing to
 himself, in his very soule ; and so would mende.
 But the deuill desires to holde him tyed fast vp,
 in a deepe interior blindenesse , and so keepes
 him safe for himself , without inducing him
 to committ other sinnes. For if he fell into

them also, he would peraduenture giue ouer both the one, and the other, and so escape out of his hand.

You therefore must be sure, to carry your eyes open, vpon your owne hart; and when you finde not there a profound contempt, and confusion of yourself, in the high presence of Almighty God: be you well assured, that you are farre from knowing yourself; and that you haue yet, no other eyes, but of flesh and bloud; and no true celestiall light at all. For this *light* searches into the most hidden corners, and makes the soule highly ashamed, euen of those things, which in the sight of worldly eyes, will seeme to haue beene well done. After this shame, teares of griefe and true humility are wont to growe; whereby the soule is wholly, and absolutely made subiect to God, & to euery creature for his sake. Now, when this is wanting, all things goe after another fashion, and the wound is not cured, but onely skinned. And in that case, we must call vpon our Celestiall Phisition, & not giue ouer, till, by litle and litle, we may gett some small thread of light, whereby to enter, and see the retraits and darke holes thereof, and finde her faultes euen in those things, which haue apparance to be well done.

Our Lord doth not instantly imparte this giuft; but when himself is best pleased to doe it. And in the meane time, let vs know, that we must be sure, not to putt confidence in our

Hier. 3.

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Matth

7.

Marke

11.

Luc. 11.

owne workes; and if yet this vertue be now wanting to vs, let vs confide in our Lord, that he will bestow it vpon vs, in his good time. For he, that promised *That he will not giue a stone to him, who shall demaunde bread; and that our Father of heauen, will giue a good spirit to such as aske it.* I beseech him to be your light, that so you may know him, to honour him; and that you may know yourself, to despise yourself. And departe you, wholly from yourself, that you may be wholly subiect to him. You must also consider, that you must not want some bodie, euen heere on earth, who may call you to an account, therefore soe you gett great store of sanctity against the time, when you shall goe into another world. And, in the meane while, be sure, there be nothing in you, for which it may importe me to chide you; and for which you may haue reason to be ashamed, as hauing beene a cause of payne to vs both. Christ our Lord keepe you euer, in that side of his, which was pierced by a launce, Amen.



*A Letter of the Authour to a certaine
Preacher, against the temptation of
disconfidēce, & of the benefitts which
we enioy in Christ our lord.*

DOe not, Sir, I beseech you, conceiue anie vnkindenesse at my hands, but forgiue me as *S. Paul* saith; since God hath forgiven the offences, which we haue committed against him. You know alreadie, how full of faults I am, which might suffice to make anie man fayle in the seruice, which he owes. Sometimes I haue wanted a messenger, as I did, where I haue beene of late, and doe yet remaine; For if no bodie bring me word of anie, I know not, where I am to seeke him. I beseech you, Sir, beleiue, that in a matter of more importance I will haue loue enough for the doing you seruice.

I holde this distrust of Saluation, to which you tell me, you are subiect, for a most plaine temptation. Nay, I holde it, not onely to be certaine, but sottish also. For it deserues no better name, then that, if it will not be discharged, by the consideration of those benefitts, which we possesse in *Christ* our lord, as if this businesse, were the worke of our hands, or the rewarde of our meritts; and not by the grace of God, through *Iesus Christ*. You must therefore

enlarge your litle hart , towards the immenſeſſe of that loue , wherewith the Father gaue vs his Sonne , and with him , gaue vs himſelf , and the *Holie-Ghoſt* , and all things. Receiue this grace , with giuing of thanks , and enioy you God , ſince he beſtowes himſelf vpon you. And if your demeritts fright you , remember , that one of the benefitts , which the Father impartes to vs in Chriſt our lord ; is the payement of our debts : and the ſweetening , and appeaſing of that wrath , which our finnes deſerued.

Pet. 2. Why doe you doubt of a *pardon* , ſince you doubt not of that *Paſſion* , which he endured for our finnes ? What doth it profit you , to confeſſe , that Chriſt our lord dyed for vs (*he who was luſt , for vs , that were vnuſt*) if you beleeue not , that his death killed our finnes : and now , if they be dead , why do you feare them ? For
Exod. 15. the Children of *Iſrael* , whome our lord drew out of *Egypt* , ſeing that their enemies were drowned in the ſea , did not feare , but ſung praises to our lord : taking occaſion thereof , from thoſe very enemies , who had perſecuted them before ; and whome formerly they had feared. And though we haue not ſo aſſured *Faith* , that our finnes are pardoned , as we are ſure , that our lord , dyed for them , (becauſe we do not ſo certainly know , that his merits are applyed to vs) yet the new hart , which God gaue vs , when he called vs to himſelf , may be a good ſigne of his friendſhipp , and pardon , whereby we may well hope that our finnes alſo

are forgiven. And besides that *spirit* of being his children, which he gave vs, when he imparted his loue, as the loue of a Father to vs, may well be taken for a particular assurance, that in the hart of God, we are esteemed as his sonnes, since in our harts, we esteeme him as our Father. For it is blasphemie to affirme, that I louing God, he should not loue me: since that loue wherewith I loue him, is neuer giuen me, but by his hand,

I beseech you, thinke not of our lord, with a short hart, & a strait, but in great beleife of his goodnesse, as we are commaunded. And cast vp your eyes, to that signe of our saluation, *Christ* our lord; who is the assurance of our hope; and who is so acceptable to his Father, and by whose participation, we are also made acceptable to him, and we haue assured hope, through his bloud, to enioy eternall life, before the Throne of God. 5ap. 1.

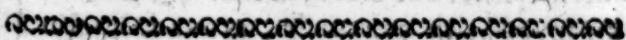
And if it seeme to you, that your workes are weake, and poore, it is reason you should thinke so still. But what reason is this, why you should loose your confidence? By *Christ* our lord, we were made freinds of enemies; and by him we are conserued in his friendshipp. We had greater impediments to be well with God, when we were subiect to our sinnes, before we knew God: then now we haue, by the defects, into which we fall. So that, if our former sinnes, could not hinder that grace, which was communicated to vs in *Christ* our lord: much

lesse shall our present faults, be able to breake of this friendship, we being now incorporated in *Christ*, who is beloued by his Father.

A good thing it is for vs to feeble our pueritie, and miserie: but yet it must be with condition, that withall, we beleue highly of the bountie, and riches of the mercie of God. And let vs glorifie his goodnesse in our wickednesse: since with so much loue he tolerates his children, who are so faultie, so weake, and so miserable. Why should you deprive God of the glorie, to haue great latitude of loue towards his children? For by reason of the *faith*, and *loue*, which wee carrie to his sonne, he hath patience, with the faults, which we commit; when once we haue bewailed them, and done true penance for them.

Beleue therefore now at length, that as there is goodnesse enough in God, to make you loue him: so there is meritt enough in *Christ* our lord, to make you be beloued for his sake: and liue you with gratitude, for the benefitts, which you haue receiued, as also for the pardon of those errours, which you daily committ. And be daily accepting of all good occasions, and fight the warres of our lord with ioy: as that *Iudas Machabens* did. And God giuing you, that which he giues, you may hope, you shall enioy his kingdome, though perhaps you may be put to suffer in temporall fire, for the hay, and straw, and wood, which shall be found in your soule. Be you euer breathing more and more towards

Profit in spirit: but yet so, as that it may be accompanied with quietnesse, grounded vpon Confidence. For though it should grow to be no more, then now it is, euen that being carefully kept, will suffice for your saluation. But if you looke onely vpon yourself, we are all so full of faults, that your soule will neuer bee without dismay: nor will you perceiue, that you are greatly beloued by our lord. And then proceeding after such a manner as that, how will you be able to serue him, and giue gust, to his holie spirit, which is dwelling in you. For this spirit is chearefull: and we checke it, by our anguish, and dismay: against which S. Paul thus dissuades vs, saying. *That we must not contristate the holie spirit of our lord.* The summe of all is this, that you must know, and consider your fautes: and that they must seeme very great in your eyes: and you must bewaile and lamente them by *Confession* and *Penance*. But yet still you must consider, that those benefitts, which we possess in *Christ* our lord, are greater: by reason whereof, you must confide yourself to be beloued: and you must doe it with much thankfullnesse. And if God doe no more, but continue that to you, which you haue alreadie, euen that may suffice, as hath beene sayd, to make you hope for eternall life.



A Letter of the Authour to an afflicted woman. He declares, that afflictions come either through the fault of the partie, or else for tryall; and how one is to carrie himself in tribulation.

THe grace and peace of our lord *Iesus*, be euer with you, Amen. The true loue, wherewith I loue you in *Iesus Christ*, hath caused so great compassion in me towards you, in respect of what you suffer, that it hath moued me to write this letter, with desire, that it may serue you to some purpose. I know not, my good sister, whether I shall putt you into anie comfort, or rather, whether I shall not helpe you to weepe. Nor doe I know, whether or no, I should tell you, that the trouble, which you haue, is good, and that you are to carrie it with ioy; and that I should not graunt, that it is ill, as it seemes to you, and that as such you are to fly from it. I see, that if manie good men endure such accidents, as this, there are also very ill men, who endure the same. And if to some, it be a signe of loue, to others it is an effect of the wrath of God. Our lord punishes some by these meanes, and to others, who deserue no punishment, he sendes them as tryalls; and he presentes them with an occasion of meritt. And though the thing, which you endure, may proceede from either of these two causes; yet I

am not sorrie, that you perswade yourself, that it is not so likelie to be a proofoe of your vertues, as the punishment of some light fault, if that fault may well be accounted light, which deserues so heauie a punishment. For if the saints themselues acknowledge, that there is no goodnesse in themselues, but manie faultes, and much wickednesse; how much more must you doe it, who know yourself to be farre from sanctitie, and so full of sinne?

And now, if you holde it for more probable that these fruits growe from this roote, the remedie must be, that you examine well, if you haue done anie thing, for which you may deserue punishment. And know, that for the most parte, it vses to be some litle dust of vaine-glorie: and if you see not the true reason of it, esteeme your case to be so much the worse, when not withstanding you are so full of faultes, you can discerne none.

But now, since the blow is come, *humble yourself vnder the mightie hand of God*: as knowing, that you are worthie of greater torment. Beseech him, to haue mercie on you, and that he cast you not off from himself. Say: O lord, I haue sinned, and anie punishment, how sharp soeuer, is in itself, too light for me: considering the greatnesse of my sinnes. If thou be pleased to punish me, here I am, extend the hand, o lord, discharge the blow: Cutt, burne, and kill: onely permitt not, that I be diuided, and driuen away from thee. If I haue sinned, let not

thy punishment be, to let me sinne anie more, for the naturall punishment of a fault, is payne, and not a second fault.

But now neuerthelesse, I would not, that by your thinking your faultes, to haue beene the cause of your crosses, you should discomfort yourself, and be so farre dismayed, as to make you fall, and that as by some precipices into despaire. I desire; on the one side, that you humble yourself, beleiuing that your sinnes haue deserued them, and on the other side, that you be comforted by remembring, that you are the childe of God, and none of them, who are forgotten, since your father hath beene carefull to correct you as a childe, for feare least else you would haue beene worse. And beleieue me in one thing, though I be no Prophet, that if our lord in his mercie, had not humbled you, as he hath done, you would perhaps haue fallen into some parte of Lucifer's pride, which had beene infinitely worse: and therefore hath he kept you so humble, that you neither dare, nor euer so much as can, holde vp your head.

Giue thanks therefore to our lord for this fauour, and be happie in that you haue his grace. But alreadie I know, you will say thus to me: If I could be sure, that I were his childe, and not hisemie: and that this were the correction of a father, and not the punishment of a Iudge: If I could perswade myself outright, that I were in his fauour, what could I wish for more then that? But I verily beleieue, that

vnlesse it might be hell, there is not so wicked a creature, as I am, to be found: and how then can I possesse such a thing as grace? This life of mine, is not a life of the sonnes of God: but it is a life, or to speake more truly, it is a verie death of the damned.

O my good sister, if you know the guift of God, and what kinde of people they are, who for the most parte are putt to suffer such things, as these: you would perhaps reioyce. If I saw, that the enemyes onely of God, did endure them, infallibly I should be much afflicted: but I finde, that his best friends are tempted in this kinde: and why then should I not be comforted thereby? Iob the holie man, saw himself one day in so sad a case, that he sayd: I haue despaired. Such things had passed in his hart, that he seemed to be fallen into despayre. But to the ende, that we may see, that indeede he did not despaire, he instantly goes to aske mercie: and he, who askes mercie, despaire not.

Iob. 7.

Dauid sayd, as we all know, that God had cast him cleane out of his sight, and that he saw himself couered with obscuritie, and darkenesse, and enuironed euen by the sorrowes of death, and the danger of hell. And he sayth, that such things happened to him, as no man will vnderstand, but he, through whose hart they had passed.

Psal.
30.

I will omitt the tribulations of S. Paul, which were caused by Satan, and which made him hang downe the head; for of these you haue heard many other times. In the liues of

Rom. 4.

those holie Fathers, I haue read manie things, which I should neuer haue beleiued, if the Author were not a man of much authoritie. And euen, at this day, we heare and see strange things, which arriue to certaine deuout persons, and seruants of our Lord; and he hath drawen them out of these temptations, with great spirituall gayne. Whereby we gather: that a man in such cases, must, like Abraham, beleue that, which he sees not; and hope, euen against hope itself.

Tell me, my good Sister, haue you seene these potters heate their fornace? Haue you seene that smoake which is so thicke & black? That kindling of fyre, and euen the resemblance of hell it self, which passeth there? who would beleue, but that the potts, which stand there within, would be mouldred euen to dust, by the rage of that fyre? Or that at least, they would not grow to be as fowle as pitch, by the grossenelle of the smoake? And yet, when that furie is past, and the fire quenched, and the time come, when they vnfurnace the potts, you see, that though they were soft, and made of durt, they come forth as hard as stone; and they, who formerly were so very browne, shew themselves as white as snow; and so neate and daintie otherwise, that they become the table of kings.

Rom. 9.

We are called by S. Paul, by the name of potts of clay, and certainly with great reasons; since we are so soft, and weake in suffering the

knockes of affliction. Make account, that you also are some poore litle pott, & that they haue putt you out to bake; For you were so weake, as that you could not well retaine, and conserue the liquour of grace, which was infused into you by Almighty God.

They will bake you, my good Sister, and you must haue patience. They haue trust you into the furnace of tribulation. Endure now those fyres, those foggye flames, and those obscurities, and by confiding in the wisdom and goodnesse of our good potter, you shall not be turned into ashes, which may be carried away by the winde, nor disfigured by anie ill marke, which may be putt vpon you; but rather you shall become hard, in being able to suffer; that so, though you should fall, you may not breake yourself. And you shall be also purged from that disgracefull colour, which before you had; and finally you shall be made fitt, and capable to be a vessell of honour, and to be serued vp to the table of Almighty God. Procure, not to come broken out of the furnace, least they cast you heere, and there, as a thing of nothing. Those potts are onely broken, which loose their patience in the furnace of tribulation; but I confide in our Lord, that you will be able to come forth, without any hurt.

Suffer now a litle, for quickly the whole businesse will be at an ende. Be not you dismayde, how busiesoeuer the deuill be. Let him persecute you as much as he will, but confide

you in God. It is a signe, that the deuill hath no parte in you, since he followes you so hard. For if he had you in his hand, he would not follow you. It is a signe, that you are departed out of his kingdome, since he hath dispatched so many squadrons of armed men after you.

Exod.

12 &

14.

You are passing out of the darkenesse of Egypt, that you may goe to the land, which our Lord hath promised you; and now beholde, how Pharaο followes you, with his whole armie. You finde all wayes shutt vp against you. The redd sea is before you, and your enemies are behinde you; and you finde not anie meanes, whereby to escape. But feare not; haue good hope, and you shall see the wonders, which our Lord will worke. Our Lord will fight for you; and you shall but holde your peace. Our Lord will open a way for you, through the midst of the sea. The waues thereof shall serue you for a wall, both on the right hand, and on the left; and you shall passe, without so much as wetting your foote, through the midst of your tribulations, and temptations, whereas your enemies shall be drowned therein.

Exod.

14.

Doebut conceiue, what ioy that will be, when (all the people of God, being passed through the dangerous sea of this world) the most *Blessed Virgin Marie* (who was figured in the person of that other Marie the sister of Moyfes) shall beginne to sing that Canticle of so great triumph; and when you in companie

Exod.

15.

of other Virgins shall answer her.

And to the ende, that you may be yet more comforted, know from me, that you haue no cause of any scruple; for your case is rather, that you suffer torment, then that you cōmitt sinne. For so that you consent not freely to those temptations, nor delight yourself in those thoughts, which the deuill offers; and desire not, for your parte, so much as to thinke thereof, what cause of scruple can you haue? And you shall beleiue me, as a man, who knowes your conscience well, that how soeuer you may thinke, that you haue giuen consent; it is but feare, which makes you thinke so; as it happens to them, who are sicke of feauers, or be subiect to any strong passion. Let this serue to excuse you, for that which is past; but not to discharge you from being diligent in the future. And though some litle thing should haue stucke to you, and though you had suffered some light hurt, yet so long as ydu render not, nor yeilde yourself to be ouercome, the very wounds, which haue beene receiued by anie man at armes in the seruice of a king, haue beautie and glorie in his sight.

The benefitt, and meritt, which you draw out of the victory, is greater then the preiudice, which you suffer in the conflict, and therefore let nothing trouble you. Be not deceiued in beleiuing, that those imaginations, or temptations are any things of yours; or wrought by you. Workes they are of Lucifer, and wordes

they are of his speaking, and images of his representing. Beholde you all that businesse as a thing belonging to others, and wherewith you haue nothing to doe. And carrie yourself iust so, as you would doe, when you should heare a man blaspheme, or speake anie other fowle deformed wordes; for which, though you would be much in paine, in regarde of the offence, which thereby is done to Almighty God; yet in fine, it would be a kinde of comfort in some respect to you, when you saw, that it was not you, who offended him.

Lett it grieve you, that the deuill doth both say, and doe so like himself: and let it comfort you to consider, that it is not you, but he, and that he will smart for it. S. Paul saith, that he gloried in his afflictions, & tribulations: because the vertue and strength of Christ our Lord, shined more therein.

My good Sister, if indeede you loue Christ our Lord; you will reioyce, for that glorie, which he gathers from your infirmity. Doth it not seeme to you, that God shewes his strength in you, since by the weakenesse of a poore miserable woman, who is indeede but a very childe, and a sick creature, and a kinde of nothing, he ouercomes the strength, and courage of those infernall powers? Will not you be then content to be assaulted, vpon condition, that Christ our Lord may be glorified? Yes certainly, I know you will, and that most willingly. Nor can I beleue lesse of that charitie, which

you pretende to haue, nor of that desire, which you carrie, that our Lord may be pleased to serue himself of you, whether it be in prosperitie, or aduersity, in sweete or bitter, by way either of loue, or greife, either in peace, or warre. Our Lord is pleased now, that you serue him in warre, and vnder the incommodities of heate, and colde, with your weapons by your side, both day and night: being content with broken sleepes, and being subiect to surprises, as if you stand vpon the toppe of a pike: yea and (though it will afflict you most) you must contente yourself to be farre absent from your king. But after this season, there will come another, and our Lord will commaunde, that you shall serue him in his banquetting-house, where you shall enioy as much, as you can desire. In the meane time, you shall ioye in this; that you are doing him seruice. And I beseech him to strengthen your soule, that so it may be able to fight the battailles of our Lord, and to make you a conquerour therein, that so you may deserue that Crowne of glorie, which he hath promised to such, as ouercome; Amen.

F I N I S.